2 bomb blasts injure 3 in Bacolod and Iloilo

STORY ON PAGE A2

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'Golden rice' arrives in RP

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—After nearly a decade of research in Europe, the much-acclaimed "golden rice" has finally arrived in Asia, its intended destination.

But even before the genetically engineered (GE) rice is transplanted from the laboratory to the fields, it has created controversy. One green

GOLDEN/ A19

Cebuano tops 2nd board exam

BY MARVI GIL
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—It was 11 p.m. Thursday, the night before results of the medical licensure examinations were to be released. Rey Francisco Arcenas was at an Internet café in this city, logging onto the INQUIRER website.

CEBUANO/ A19

Macapagal: No plots, just consultations

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

BELYING the allegation of lawyer Rene Saguisag that she had plotted a coup against her predecessor, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said that she merely held "consultations" with five ranking military and police officials when she was still part of the Estrada administration.

In a speech at the 15th anniversary of the People Power I Revolution at the People Power Monument on Edsa, Ms Macapagal said the consultations had to do with the growing outrage by all sectors over graft and corruption and the inability to govern of then President Joseph Estrada.

"The military officers and men who talked to me in the hours, days, weeks and even months before Edsa II were experiencing in their conscience the same erosion about the then incumbent President's moral authority to govern," she said in a prepared speech.

"All of them voiced out their concerns during consultations that I conducted with all sectors of society and all who watched TV, listened to the radio and read about the impeachment proceedings came to believe that President Estrada was guilty and . . . lost all moral authority to government," Ms Macapagal said.

She was reacting to a call by Saguisag, a lawyer of Estrada, that Executive Secretary Renato de Villa investigate her for admitting that she had been meeting since January 2000 with the five military and police officials who were disgruntled with Estrada.

Saguisag also called that court-martial proceedings be conducted against Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes; Deputy Director Leandro Mendoza, acting Philippine National Police chief; Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa of the AFP Joint Command Staff College; PNP Supt. Reynaldo Berroya; and Director Hermogenes Ebdane, PNP Directorate for Human Resource Development and Doctrination.

"I really do not know if there is really basis to initiate an investigation in that direction. Coup plot against whom?" De Villa said.

Former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado also sees no need to investigate the senior military and police officers.

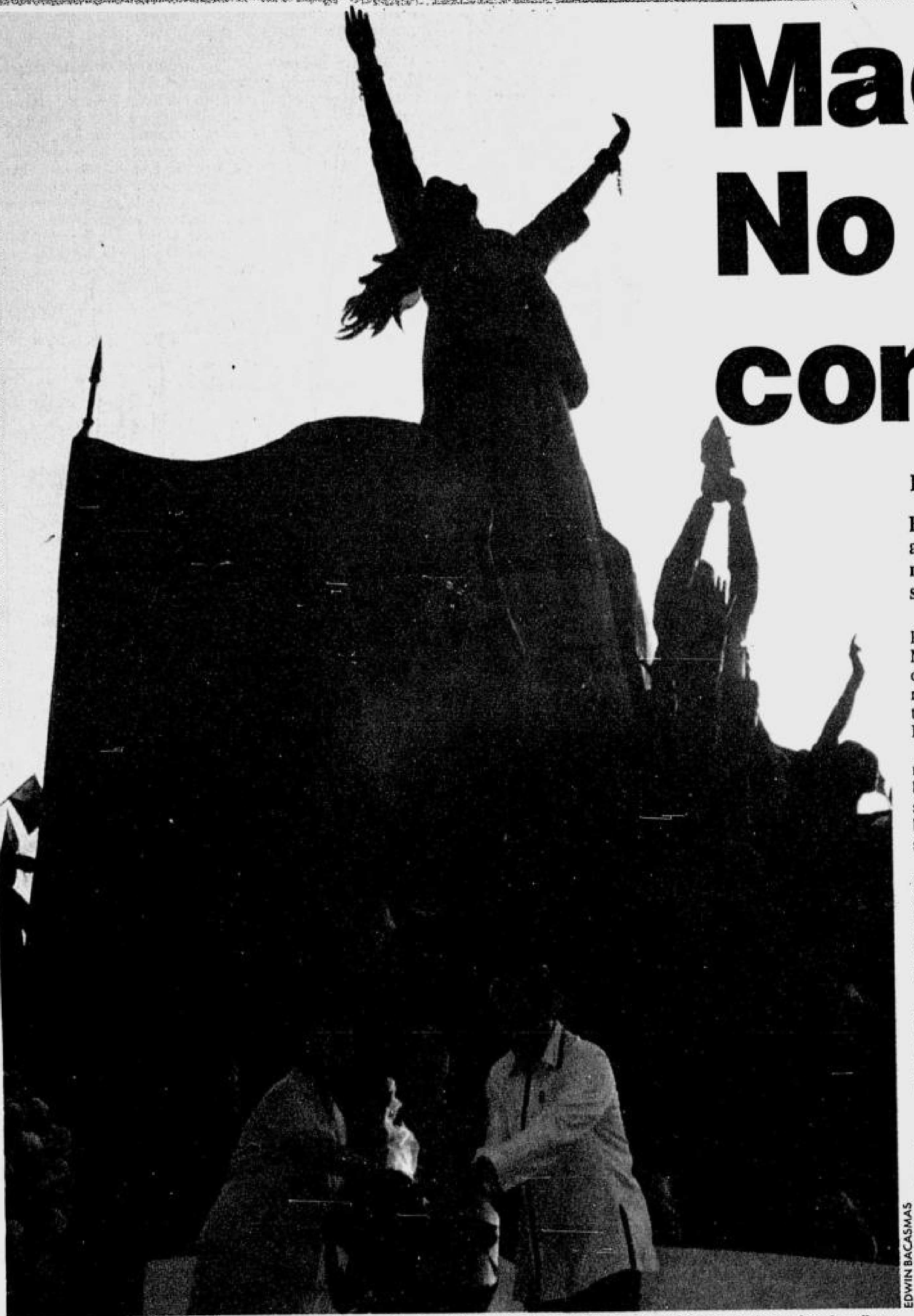
"What is there to investigate? That they talked and exchanged ideas?" Mercado, now an opposition senatorial candidate, said in Cebu City.

Mercado said there was nothing wrong if military officers expressed their thoughts, especially with the then Vice President.

He said Ms Macapagal had the right to talk with these officers because she was the Vice President.

Reyes and Ebdane said they were ready to face court-martial proceedings if that was the price for helping turn the tide in favor of anti-

MACAPAGAL/ A20



EDWIN BACASMAS

THREE presidents, two uprisings, one flame. Corazon Aquino, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Fidel Ramos light a freedom flame in honor of the "spontaneous combustion" of People Power, in front of its monument on Edsa in White Plains, Quezon City.

Davide says SC to resolve soon issue of presidency

BY ROGER V. PALLER
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—It won't be long before the Supreme Court settles the issue on whether the country can have an "acting President" and a "President on leave" at the same time.

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. said Saturday the high tribunal would "really resolve" ousted leader Joseph Estrada's petition questioning the legitimacy of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of the presidency.

"Just wait because I think it won't be long before the issue is decided," Davide told a forum sponsored by Hagit-Bisdak, a Church-based group that was set up to preserve the gains of Edsa People Power II.

Estrada has asked the Supreme Court to declare him as "President on leave" and Ms Macapagal as "acting President," saying he never tendered his resignation.

Various groups, however, said Estrada's petition was only aimed at giving himself immunity from prosecution. Estrada faces a host of charges, including plunder, at the Office of the

DAVIDE/ A20

Reyes' future hinges on probe of scams

BY CARLITO PABLO

UNLESS resolved by outgoing Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes, financial irregularities in the Philippine Marines like the acquisition of Kevlar helmets and assault rifles could undermine his appointment as defense secretary, military sources yesterday said.

"Much of his bid for the defense post may rest on how he will be able to clean up the Marines," a military officer said on condition of anonymity.

"His last three weeks in office are being watched closely by both the officer corps and Malacañang," the source said.

Reyes, who is retiring on March 17 as chief of staff, had supported the Marines in their row with Rear

REYES/ A20

GMA gov't 'child of people power'

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM AND GERALD G. LACUARTA

DESCRIBING her government as a "child of people power" on the 15th anniversary of Edsa I, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday promised good governance, but called on Filipinos to help her administration amid continuing economic problems and challenges to the legitimacy of her presidency.

Later, she received on behalf of the Filipino people a special award from an organization of Nobel laureates for demonstrating that a bloodless revolt could lead to a peaceful transition of power.

The Nobel Peace Prize Laureate's Foundation chairman Pierre Marchand bowed and knelt before Ms Macapagal and said the group was "in love" with the Filipinos.

The President also gave special citations to individuals who played key roles in last month's uprising and unveiled a marker dedicated to the hundreds of thousands who gathered at Edsa.

"Our administration is the steward of the people's victory and that is the way we will do our governance. As a child of people power, our administration must reflect the sovereign will of the people," she said in a speech at the People Power Monument in the morning.

Her speech kicked off the

GMA/ A20

Chavit again in thick of 'jueteng' controversy

AFTER exploding the "jueteng" bombshell last October that led to the ouster of President Joseph Estrada, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson now finds himself in another controversy involving the same illegal numbers game.

Former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, now an opposition senatorial candidate, yesterday disclosed that Singson secretly met with jueteng operators on Feb. 16 to talk about legalizing the popular numbers game.

In a press statement, Lacson

CHAVIT/ A19

ANAK NG JUETENG NAMAN, O!

Gov't on lookout for mad cow disease

SPECIAL REPORT

BY JERRY ESPLANADA

WITH THE possibility that "mad cow" disease has made its way to our shores from Europe, the government has assured the public it is taking steps to keep the deadly disease out.

Since Nov. 14, 2000, a government ban on European beef imports suspected of carrying the dreaded disease has been in effect.

"We have to be on the lookout, to make sure no beef from European countries considered at risk is allowed entry, meaning there will be strict monitoring of all ports nationwide," said Dr. Ronello Abila, National Veterinary Quarantine Service chief.

"It also means closer coordination (is needed) among concerned government agencies," he added.

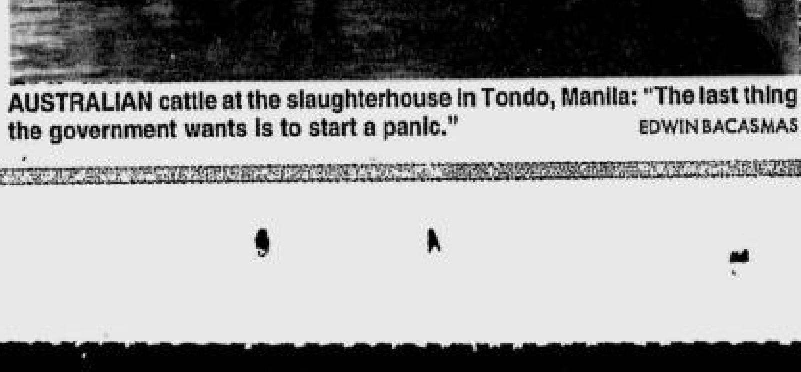
The last thing the (government) wants is to start a panic, "but concerned sectors must heed the warnings," Abila said.

The cause for concern came on the heel of reports two of three beef shipments from Ireland to the Philippines were able to enter the country even after the third shipment was held by the Bureau of Customs on suspicion it was tainted with the disease.

The shipments belonged to Monterey Foods, a subsidiary of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

San Miguel, however, has in-

GOV'T/ A20



AUSTRALIAN cattle at the slaughterhouse in Tondo, Manila: "The last thing the government wants is to start a panic." EDWIN BACASMAS

Second FRONT PAGE

SINO NA NAMAN ANG NANGGUGULO D'YAN ?

Explosions rock Bacolod, Iloilo

3 hurt, including 2-year-old girl who is now fighting for her life

BY NESTOR BURGOS JR.
AND CARLA GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Two apparently unrelated bomb blasts rocked a town near this city and Bacolod City Saturday night, leaving three persons injured, including a little girl.

Janet Sorbito, 2, is now fighting for her life in a hospital here after an explosion from a grenade lobbed at around 8 p.m. by unknown persons ripped through the roof of her family's house in Sitio Reroan, Barangay Acao, Cabatuan town, 24 km north of the city.

The blast, which created a meter-wide hole in the galvanized iron roof, also injured the girl's parents Judy, 36, and Gemma, 39, according to PO1 Peter Madera, investigator of the Cabatuan PNP. Two other children who were in another room at the house were unhurt.

Janet, who sustained wounds in the head, is now confined at the Surgical Intensive Care Unit at the Western Visayas Regional Medical Center. The Sorbito couple suffered shrapnel wounds in different parts of the body but were now in stable condition, dpctors said.

Police investigators said the grenade lobbed from outside the bamboo fence of the Sorbito's house exploded around 8 p.m. when the family was preparing to sleep.

They said they still haven't been able to identify any suspects or provide a motive for the attack. They are, however, following up leads that the attack could be related to a land conflict involving the Sorbitos.

In Bacolod, a powerful homemade bomb exploded in the city police headquarters, causing extensive damage but no injuries, police said yesterday.

The blast in a police training hall blew off a door, shattered windows and damaged at least six offices in the two-story building Saturday night, police said. A small fire was doused quickly.

No group claimed responsibility. Investigators who spoke on condition of anonymity said suspects included a number of police officers recently dismissed for alleged corruption.

A police bomb expert, Demy Montoya, said the bomb was made of ammonium nitrate packed in a long-necked Tanduay bottle and set off by a lit mosquito coil.

"The bomb was meant to send a message and not to harm people," he said.

A few minutes after the explosion, a man called and asked if the bomb had gone off, laughed and then hung up, investigators said.

At least nine police have been relieved of their duties since December when new chief Amado Marquez took over and started a crackdown on corruption and other irregularities. Marquez's office, located on the building's second floor, was not damaged by the blast.

Marquez said security had been tightened, although he immediately ruled out the involvement of communist-led New People's Army guerrillas who operate in areas outside Bacolod.

He assured Bacolod residents that there was no cause for alarm, saying he believed the blast was intended to send a message to him.

"The bombing was intended for one thing and one thing alone. To humiliate me as part of the long running effort to oust me and put an end to my vow to rid the city of organized crime and drug syndicates, and restore to our people peace and order they deserve," Marquez said.

Marquez said the police have launched a thorough investigation to determine those responsible for the bombing.

Denny Montoya, a Bacolod police bomb expert, said he suspected that a former policeman assigned to the Bacolod police might have been behind the explosion.

With a report from AP

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Nene forecast false–Herrera

PEOPLE Power Coalition senatorial candidate Ernesto "Boy" Herrera has disputed Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.'s prediction that pro-Estrada candidates in the coming polls would win a majority of seats over the administration's bets.

Herrera said he was confident the "critical mass" at Edsa II would catapult most of the PPC candidates to the Senate.

"We reckon that Edsa II will give us an advantage of two to three million votes over the pro-Estrada bets," Herrera said.

"Pimentel is misreading the public pulse. There's no way the people would give majority of the 13 Senate seats to the Estrada camp," he added.

Herrera was reacting to Pimentel's forecast the other day that deposed President Joseph Estrada's allies would win six seats in the senatorial race, while the administration PPC would only bag four slots and independent candidates would get three seats.

"The people are aware that the more pro-Estrada bets they elect to the Senate, the longer it would take for our country to recover economically and politically," Herrera said.

He agreed with Pimentel, however, that former first lady Dr. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, who is running under her husband's party, would likely get a big number of votes.

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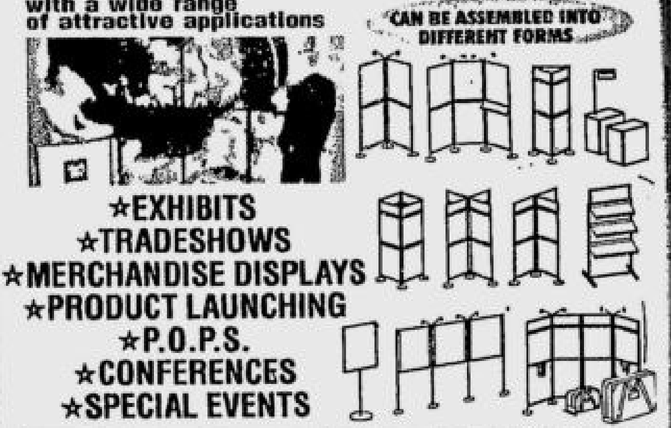
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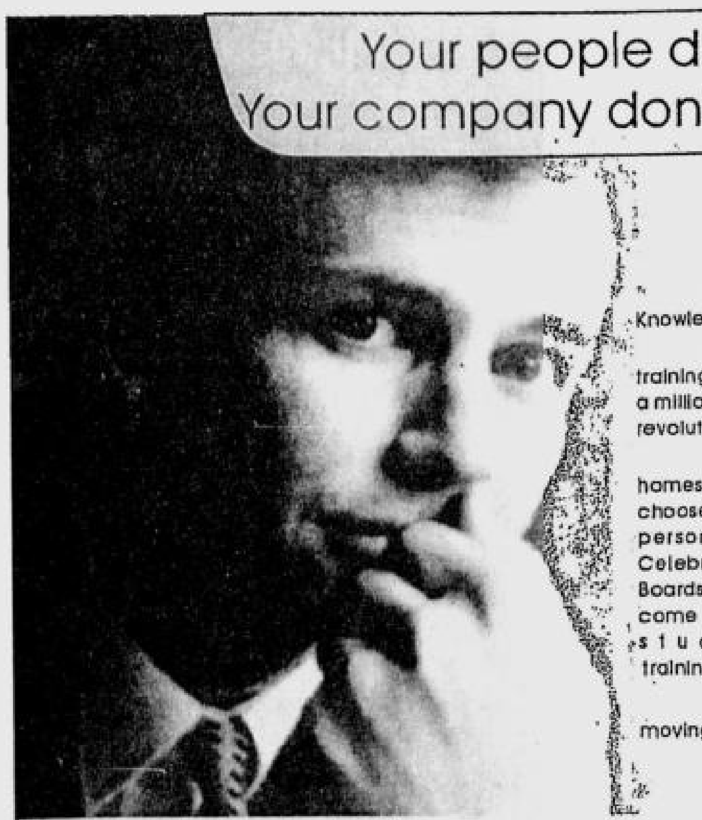
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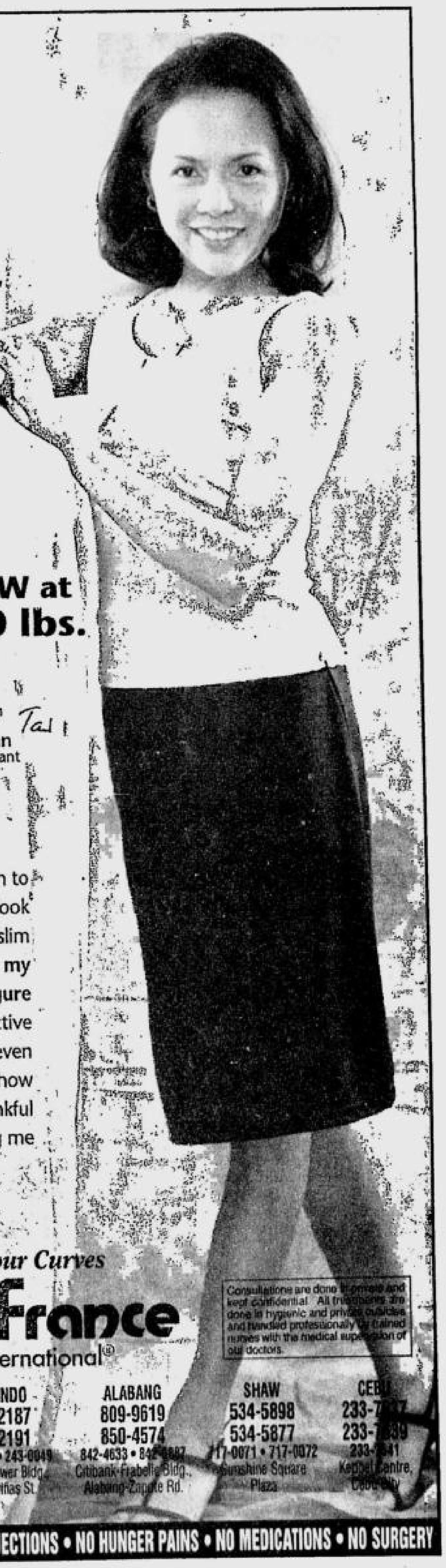

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Erap won't gamble with 'sight'

By V. Contreras

WITH his diseased left eye supposedly needing immediate treatment, deposed President Joseph Estrada said he just did not want to "gamble with my sight" and had been hoping to go abroad for the operation.

The story of a former senator who went blind after undergoing eye surgery in the country has made him think twice about going to a local hospital, Estrada said in a recent interview.

But with the government refusing to allow him leave, Estrada said he would rather "postpone the operation even though it's already due."

Estrada said he would no longer make any formal petition for permission to go abroad lest he be "misinterpreted again." Anti-Estrada groups accused him of using his eye ailment as an excuse to avoid facing criminal prosecution.

"*Mahirap isugal ang mata* (We can't afford to take any risks with our eyes). We already had one experience here of former Sen. Helen Benitez who went blind after she had her cataract removed," he told the INQUIRER.

"I'm not belittling our Filipino doctors. They're good and in fact Dr. Tolentino (his eye doctor) is a Filipino. But my concern is really the facilities. They have better facilities in America," he said.

According to Estrada, his doctor had last year scheduled his operation for next month when the cataract was expected to have already "ripened."

But People Power 2 obviously ruined his doctor's orders.

Dacer kids decry slow pace of probe

By TJ Burgonio

THE GRIEF-STRICKEN family of missing PR man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer yesterday decried the slow pace of the investigation into his abduction four months ago.

Sabina Dacer-Reyes, the PR man's second daughter, said the authorities' failure to find new leads to the whereabouts of her father and his driver, Manuel Corbito, has contributed to their agony.

"What we know is what you know. That's what's painful. We're abducted and at the same time, blindfolded, handcuffed, whatever you call it, we feel that way," a teary-eyed Sabina said. "No one knows what's happening to us. It's very, very painful."

Bongco, 58

ANTONIO O. Bongco of Quezon City died on Saturday at age 58.

He is survived by his wife Clara, children Dedette, Ponchit, Kikoy, Gina, Emy, Vicky, Khor, Tina and Lenlen; sister Cora; in-laws Tony, Rachel, Daisy, Dennis, Arvin, and Carlo; grandchildren Paolo, Carlo, Sheehan, Wauie, Trisha, Nikko, Dean and Don.

The body lies at the Arlington Chapel on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City. Interment is scheduled on March 3, 11 a.m., at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

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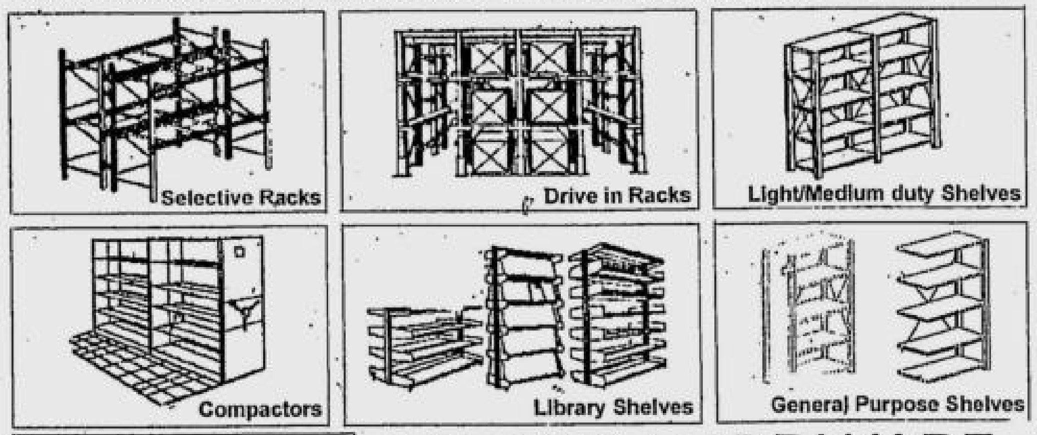

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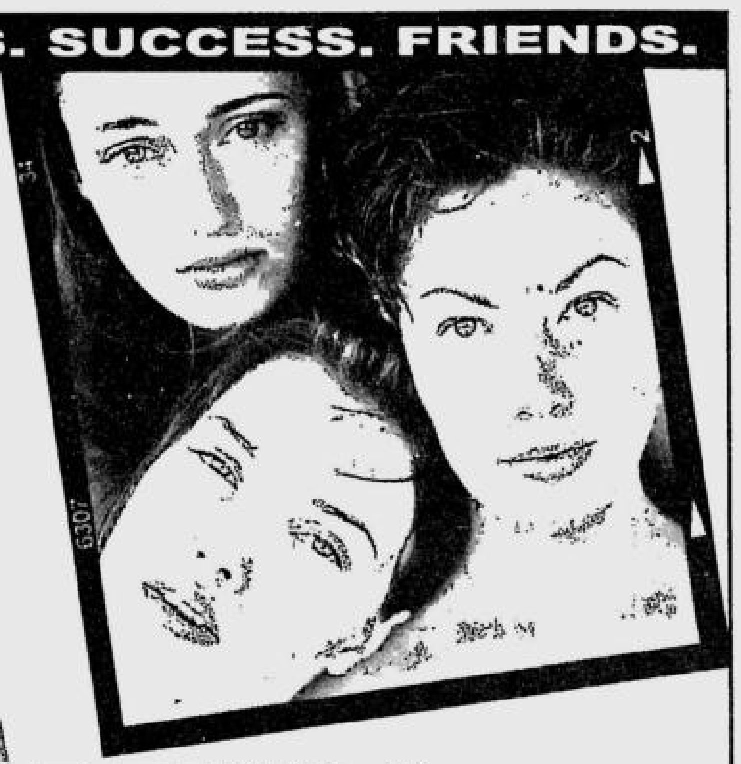

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Mike Defensor threatens to quit

Housing chief miffed by two appointments

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

DEFENSOR

MICHAEL Defensor has barely warmed his seat as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, but he is already threatening to resign.

Defensor, the former congressman from Quezon City, is said to have already prepared his letter of "irrevocable" resignation which he plans to hand over personally to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Defensor is apparently disgruntled by the appointment of the two housing agencies under his supervision, purportedly by the head of the Presidential Management Staff, Vicky Garchitorena.

The appointments, which were allegedly done without consulting Defensor, had pushed him to resign, according to HUDCC sources who asked not to be named.

The two appointees are Zorayda Alonso, the new president and chief executive officer of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. and Ed Pamintuan, a defeated Pampanga congressional candidate who was appointed general manager of the National Housing Authority.

The appointments took effect on Feb. 21. Defensor became HUDCC chair on Feb. 9.

According to one HUDCC source, Defensor should have been consulted about such appointments "as a matter of courtesy" the HUDCC chair actually makes the recommendation for such appointments.

The appointments having made without consulting him, Defensor "fears that he might be rendered ineffective since the two hold key housing (agency) positions. What if they follow other authorities other than him?" the source said.

Defensor was also angered by the fact that he had asked Malacañang that he be appointed concurrent chair of the NHA so that he could start his programs in socialized housing. "His request was coursed through the PMS," the source added.

The source said Alonso is a friend of long standing of Garchitorena.

However, Garchitorena is never mentioned in Defensor's resignation letter, which stated only that his stay at the HUDCC has become "untenable due to recent developments," a second source said.

"If you read the letter, you would probably be frustrated to find out that there is no bill of particulars. Mike (Defensor's nickname) would rather explain directly to the appointing power," the source said.

Perez backs Tinga as DOE secretary

JUSTICE Secretary Hernandez Perez yesterday recommended the appointment of former Taguig congressman Dante O. Tinga as secretary of the Department of Energy.

In his letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Perez said Tinga's record reflected the former lawmaker's ability to find a happy balance among the conflicting interests of energy industry players, consumers and environmentalists and at the same time withstand the pressures and importuning of the competing sectors.

Raul Concepcion, chair of Consumer Oil Price Watch, made a similar observation in his letter to the President.

Perez said the new energy secretary should preside over the restructuring of the power industry and the privatization of the National Power Corp. with the expected approval of the proposed Omnibus Power Act after the elections. Because of the public clamor to reduce the electric rates in the country, the second highest in Asia, the power bill might become one of the centerpieces of the Macapagal administration, Perez said.

The power bill is currently under review by the bicameral conference of the Senate and the House of Representatives and the executive branch.

"The challenge is right along Tinga's alley since the power bill was his policy initiative during the second half of the Ramos administration. Tinga directed the researches on the bill and evolved the final version which was endorsed to the House for plenary debate," Perez said.

"Unfortunately, the bicameral conference committee in the present Congress had reportedly approved a mangled version. That is why the Cabinet has recommended a review of the version," Perez explained.

Tinga conducted extensive researches for the proposed Power Act and even held working visits to countries with experience in power restructuring, such as the United Kingdom, Norway, Spain, Australia and California.

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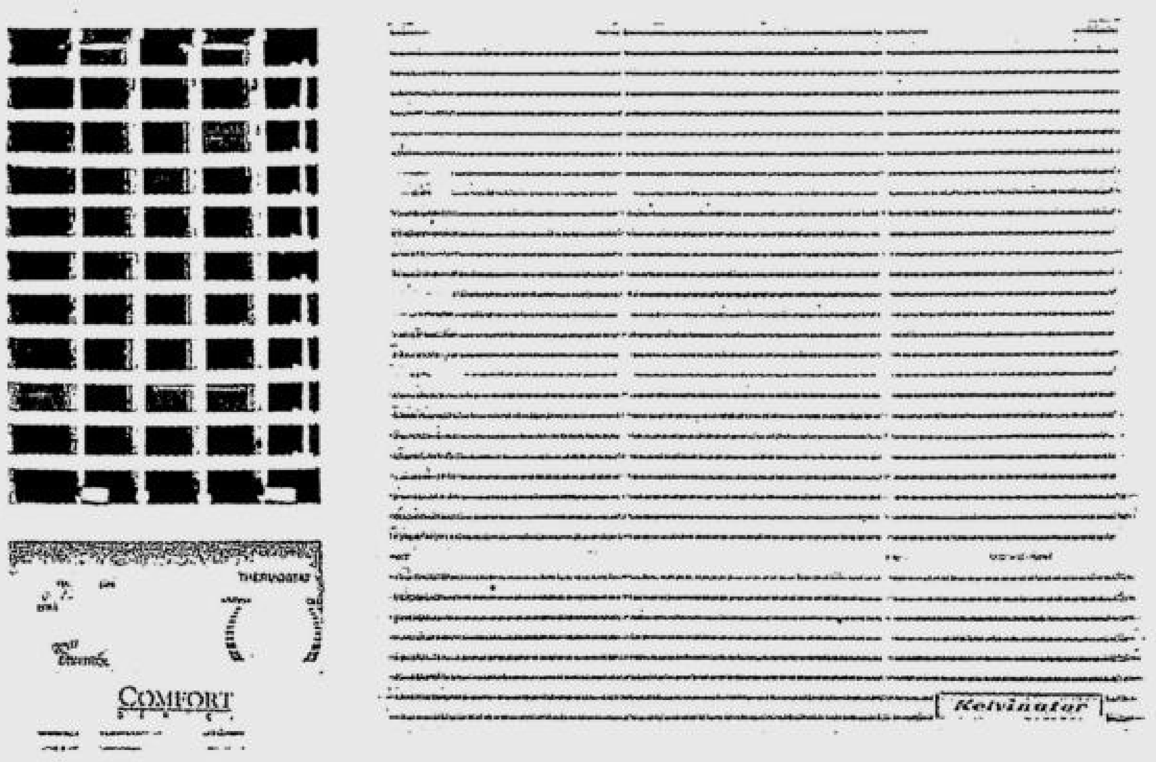
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The application package may also be downloaded from:
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Missing soldier found dead; Abus claim they beheaded 3

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Government troops said yesterday they recovered the body of a soldier who went missing following a fierce clash with Muslim extremists holding an American and a Filipino hostage on Jolo island.

But members of the Abu Sayyaf group claimed over dzXL radio here that more soldiers had been killed, including three they beheaded, in sporadic clashes, which broke out after the military launched an assault Friday on a rebel lair in Jolo's Patikul town.

Abu Sayyaf spokesman Abu Sabaya said most of the soldiers killed fell into an ambush. "The soldiers have not learned their lessons, they don't know the terrain. We might be small in number, but we are ready to die," Sabaya said.

The military's Southern Command here said it could not confirm the beheading and stressed that only two soldiers were killed and 23 others wounded in the Friday encounter.

One of those killed was the missing soldier identified as private first class Ricky Damas. Those wounded included two junior officers, Maj. Gen. Narciso Abaya, ground commander of the assault in Jolo, said.

The offensive was carried out in a continuing bid to rescue American Jeffrey Schilling and Filipino Roland Ullah, the only two remaining captives from among dozens of foreign and local hostages seized by the Abu Sayyaf last year.

Officials said Friday's offensive was carried out following tips that Abu Sayyaf commanders Galib Andang and Mujib Susukan were spotted hiding in the area. There was, however, no word on the fate of hostages.

Southcom chief Lt.Gen. Gregorio Camiling said he has directed officials to place on standby two MG-520 attack helicopters for possible airstrikes.

"We have our troops maintained in a striking distance against the Abu Sayyaf," Camiling said.

The military said at least three Abu Sayyaf rebels were captured following Friday's clash. ***AFP***

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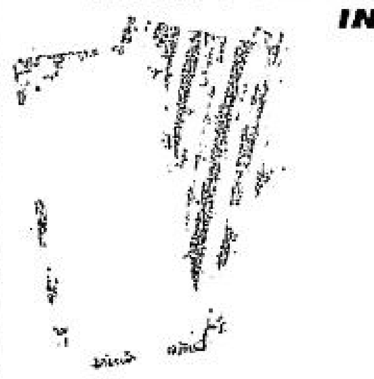

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15 RP traders held by Malaysian navy

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Malaysia's navy has arrested 15 Filipino traders who illegally strayed into its territorial water, the military said yesterday.

In a report to the Southern Command here, the Malaysian navy said a patrol gunboat had intercepted the Philippine-registered Wish Me Luck on Friday.

Malaysian navy personnel boarded the vessel and confiscated about 19 empty tanks of liquefied petroleum gas, drums and some P450,000.

Fifteen people, including the vessel's five crewmen, had been detained but the vessel was escorted back to a Philippine port. The arrested Filipinos will be subject for deportation after questioning.

Malaysian authorities have tightened security in their waters bordering the Philippines to prevent pirates and Filipino Muslim extremists from crossing.

Last year, the Muslim extremist group Abu Sayyaf launched two cross-border raids into Malaysian resorts and abducted dozens of foreign tourists and resort workers.

Nearly all the hostages were later freed from the island of Jolo following huge payments of ransom. ***AFP***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, February 26, 2000
8th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Sir 17:19-27**
Gospel: **Mk 10:17-27**

Just as Jesus was setting out on his journey again, a man ran up, knelt before him and asked, "Good Master, what must I do to have eternal life?"

Jesus answered, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not cheat, honor your father and mother." The man replied, "I have obeyed all these commandments since my childhood."

Then Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him and he said, "For you, one thing is lacking. Go, sell what you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come and follow me." On hearing these words, his face fell and he went away sorrowful for he was a man of great wealth.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were shocked at these words, but Jesus insisted, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

They were more astonished than ever and wondered, "Who, then, can be saved?" Jesus looked steadily at them and said, "For humans it is impossible, but not for God; all things are possible with God."

Commentary

The fountain of youth, the holy grail, ambrosia and red nectar, the tree of life, etc.—these are just some of the literary representations of that basic human quest for lasting happiness, for eternity, for a hereafter beyond the here and now. It is also what seems most basic in every religion. But paradoxically, as in today's Gospel, we do not have to go very far or even wait until after death to know what eternal life is about. It is about discovering a way of life that frees us from the misery of inordinate attachment to passing things even as we enjoy them for their relative worth. Qoheleth in the Old Testament reminds us of the vanity of all human pursuits, short of telling us never to regard anything in this world as our everything. Otherwise, when you lose it, you are lost as well. This way of life is what following Jesus is about.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Private document—Section 20, Rule 132 of the Revised Rules of Court provides that "before any private document offered as authentic is received in evidence, its due execution and authenticity must be proved either: (a) by anyone who saw the document executed or written; or (b) by evidence of the genuineness of the signature or handwriting of the maker." Thus, prior to the admission in evidence of a private writing, the identity and authenticity of the document sought to be presented must first be reasonably established. Where there is no proof as to the authenticity of the executor's signature appearing in a private document, such private document should be excluded. The documentary evidence submitted by the complaining witness are private instruments, being instruments executed by private persons without the intervention of a public notary or of other persons legally authorized, by which document some disposition or agreement is proved, evidenced, or set forth. Being private instruments, their due and valid execution and their genuineness and authenticity must first be established, either by the testimony of any one who saw the writing executed or by evidence of the genuineness of the handwriting of the maker thereof. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Melo, Third Division, Ong v. People, G.R. No. 140904, October 9, 2000]

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LP no longer 'L-300 Party'

FROM being snidely referred to as the "L-300 Party"—its entire membership could fit into an L300 van, it was said—the Liberal Party has turned into what could become a formidable force in the May 14 elections, the party's leaders claimed yesterday.

The party yesterday launched the senatorial bid of two of its members, Quezon City Rep. Wigberto Tañada and lawyer Francis Pangilinan, who are among the 13 candidates of the pro-administration People Power Coalition.

The party could have a third senatorial candidate as Las Piñas City Rep. Manny Villar, another PPC senatorial bet, is set to join the LP soon.

Villar could bring with him more than 30 members, LP president and Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad Jr. said at the launching which was held at the Manila Galeria Suites.

Abad revealed that Villar, who had bolted deposed President Joseph Estrada's Lapian ng Masang Pilipino coalition, had wanted to join the party earlier. But he decided to turn independent instead to avoid controversy during the intense jockeying for places in the PPC senatorial slate.

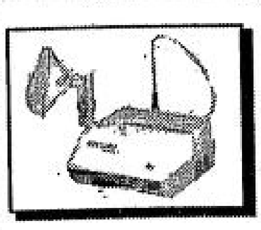
Three LP members in the PPC senatorial slate might have caused a "ruckus," Villar believed.

It was the civil society groups which had pushed for the inclusion of Tañada and Pangilinan in the PPC senatorial slate.

The LP intends to field candidates in around 60 congressional districts, and expects to win more than 30 seats, Abad said.

"We have a number of recruits… and in the next four days we might be seeing additional districts (to be fielded with LP candidates)," he said, noting that the new LP members running in the elections come from Quezon, Mt. Province-Kalinga Apayao, Mindoro Oriental and Romblon, among others.

Christine Avendaño



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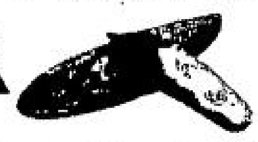

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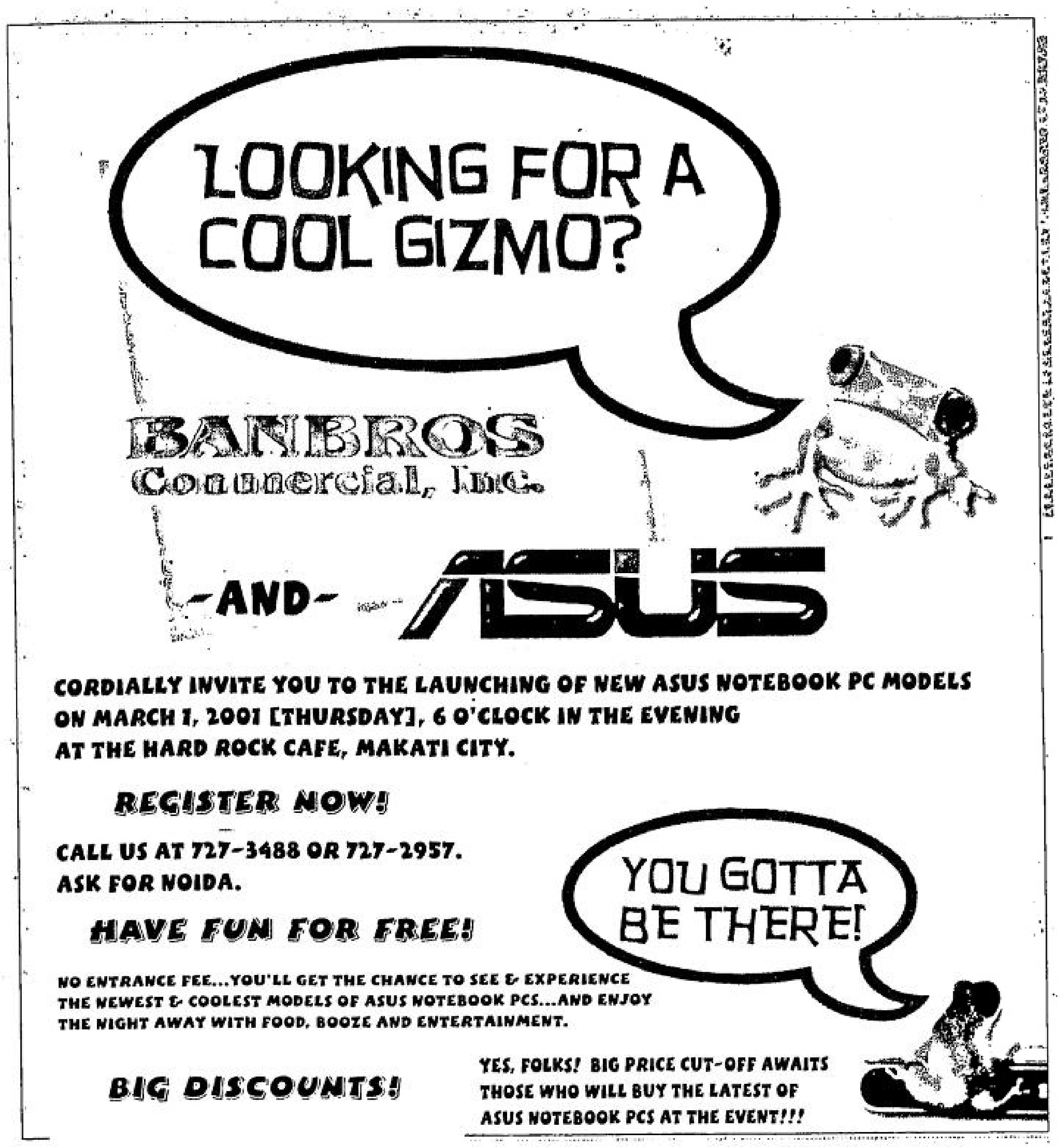

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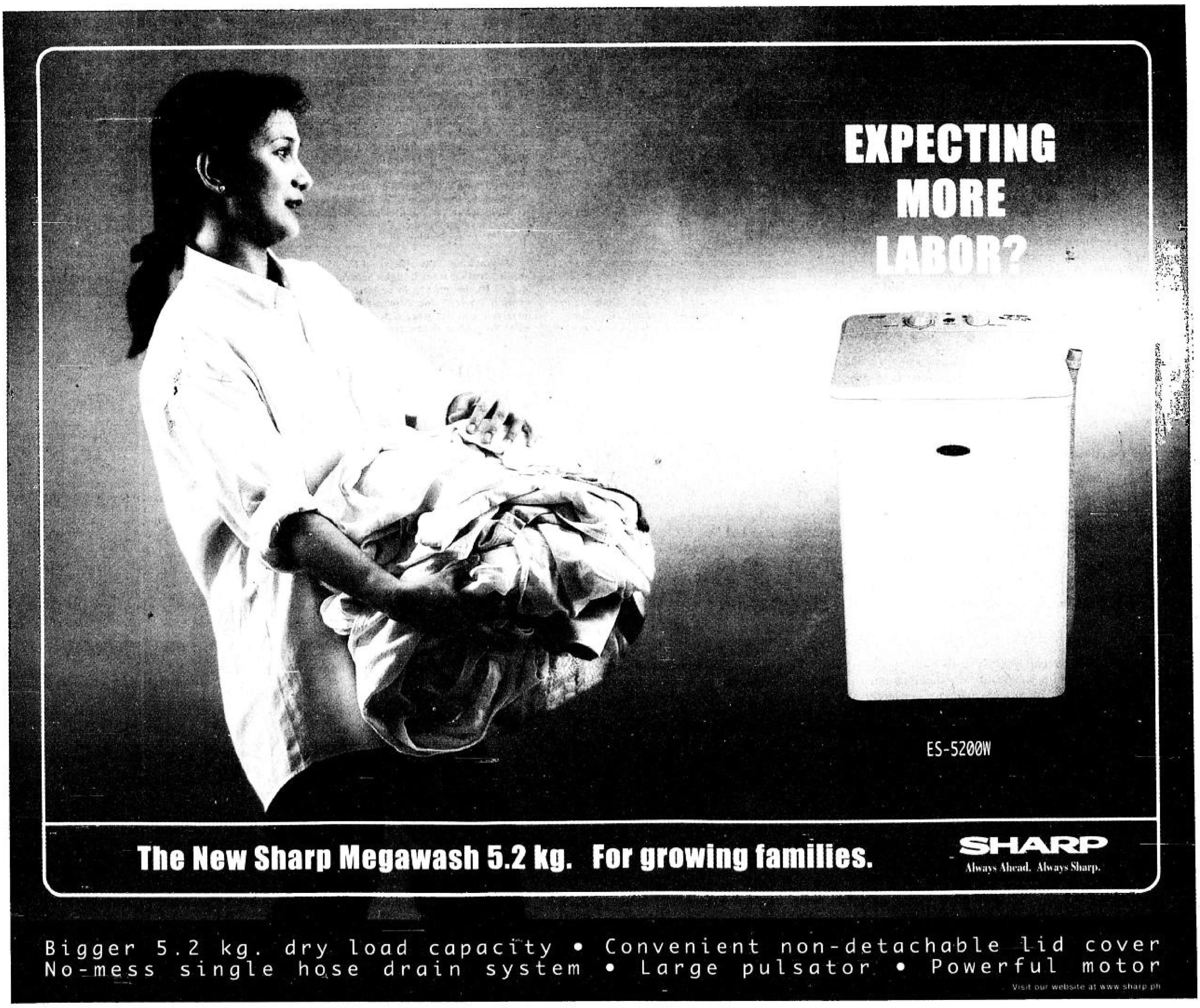

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Wong man

EDITORIAL

THEY'RE going after the Wong man. Forgive us for making this pun; we should be more serious in discussing this, which is a serious case that deserves closer examination by the leadership of the country, including the President. This is a case where the whistleblower, the messenger of bad news, and not the culprit, is being punished.

We are referring to Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong, the Navy flag officer in command, who was forced to go on a floating status after the Marines, who are under his command, asked for his relief. He angered the Marines when, in a speech on Feb. 15, he cited previous cases of irregularities in the purchase of assault rifles and Kevlar helmets.

There are reports that the dispute between Wong and some Marine officers got so mad that they threatened to bodily carry him out of his office and throw him into the sea. To defuse the situation, Gen. Angelo Reyes, AFP chief of staff, offered Wong the post of the newly created Northern Luzon Command. Wong however declined the post which he considered a demotion and said he would rather retire.

If Wong can be faulted for anything, it is that he is brutally frank and ruthlessly honest. Others may call him tactless, but that is a matter of opinion. The situation in the procurement of supplies must have deteriorated to such a point that Wong, who is known to be scrupulous with public funds, simply exploded at the meeting on Feb. 15. Some officers said he should have made his observations in a meeting only with the officers and not in front of the rank and file. (Some people, however, said that it would not have mattered because the Marine soldiers know about the irregularities in supplies procurement.)

Wong himself cannot understand why he is being punished. In an interview, he said: "Why am I the one who is being sacked? I'm the one who has the moral ascendancy. They can look at my finances—I'm not rich." And in a speech last Friday he said, "We cannot go on embracing what is common but unlawful, what is accepted but immoral." He said his only intention was to rid the Marines of malpractices, "especially when they unnecessarily endanger the lives of our sailors and Marines."

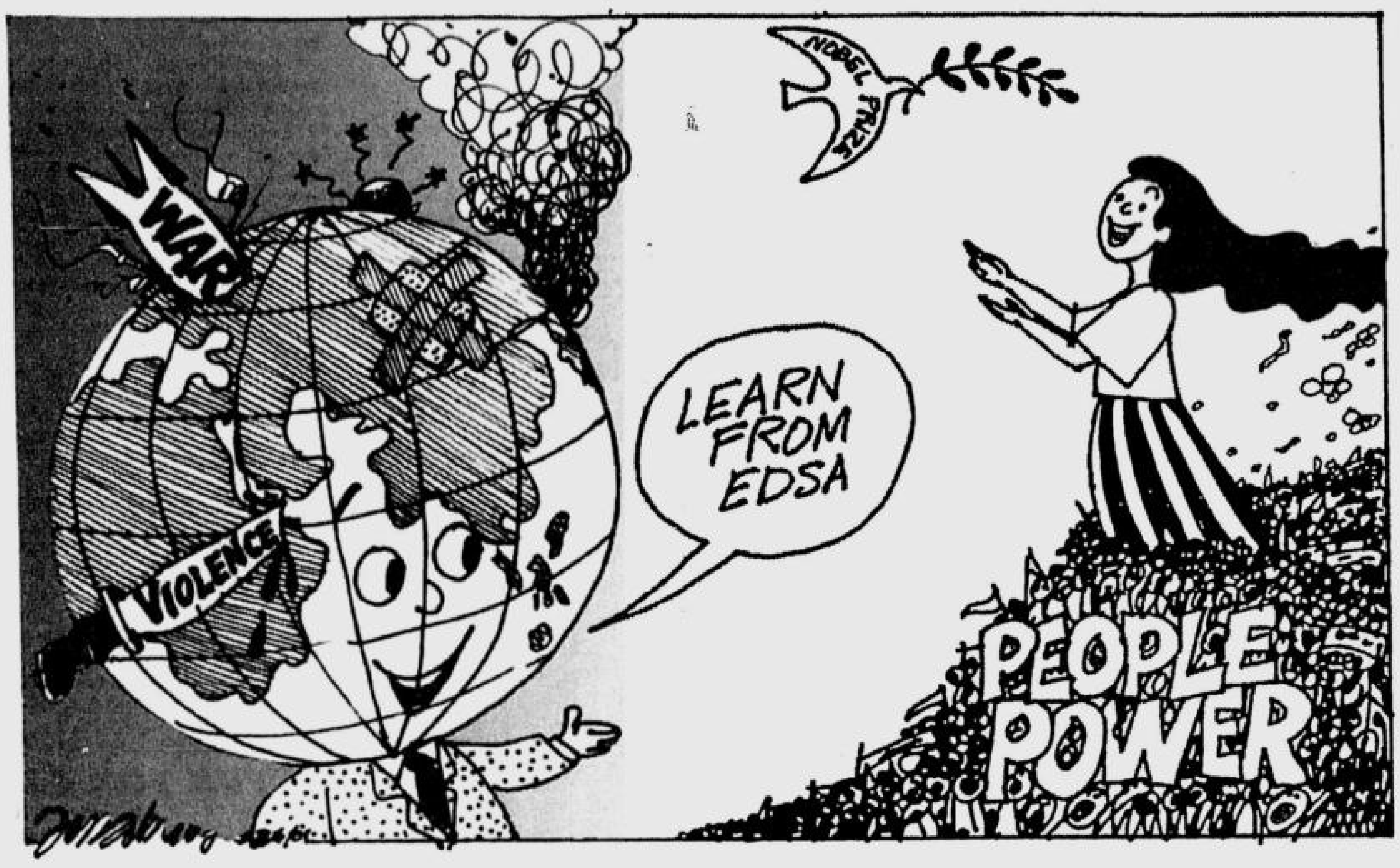
Wong has raised what is literally a life-and-death issue. Kevlar helmets, which are said to be better than steel ones, were supposed to have been purchased, but helmets of inferior quality were procured. An officer said that because non-Kevlar helmets were purchased, a number of the Marines may have died in the field because of inadequate head protection. About P7.2 million in late-model assault rifles supposed to have been purchased for the Marines are reported to be missing.

People who watched the interview of Gene Orejana with Admiral Wong on ANC last Friday were impressed with the admiral's high moral tone and sense of purpose. Wong came across as a sincere man—a man who sincerely wants to reform the Navy and the organizations under it, including the Marines. Since his assumption of the Navy chief's post last November, he has always been stressing the principles of competence, honesty and discipline.

But for standing for honesty in the Navy and the Marines, he ironically now finds himself being punished, being placed in a "floating" status. His alternatives are to accept a demotion or face an early retirement.

We hope President Macapagal will look more closely into Wong's case. In her inaugural speech, she said that one of her core beliefs is that "we must improve moral standards in government and society in order to provide a strong foundation for good governance." And she also said that "to ensure that our gains [in economic development] are not dissipated through corruption, we must improve moral standards."

This is a case involving corruption and moral standards in a branch of the Armed Forces of the Philippines that has hitherto been known for its courage, competence and discipline. The more appropriate response to the observations made by Admiral Wong might have been to admonish him for what some officers call his "tactlessness" and then make him file specific charges, which is what Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former Marine commandant, has suggested. Then the Marine officers involved should be made to face administrative and court-martial proceedings, if these are warranted by the evidence. The Marines should not be allowed to blackmail the political and AFP leadership into sweeping their dirt under the rug under an implied threat that they would stage a coup if the charges were pressed. We did not go through People Power II just to condone corruption in any branch of the government or the Armed Forces.



Why they want the Bangko Sentral chief to resign

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ARGUMENTS of ousted President Joseph Estrada's lawyers before the Supreme Court to support their claim that their client is still president is a confession that he is guilty of the plunder, bribery and corruption charges against him. They argue that there can be two presidents at the same time: an acting president who exercises the power of the presidency and runs the government, and a titular president who is president in name only. They contend that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will continue to run the government and Erap will continue to stay in the sidelines. The nation would be like a man who has a legal wife who runs his household, and a mistress who stays away from the limelight, an arrangement Erap is familiar and comfortable with.

If he is not going to exercise the powers of the presidency, why then does Erap want to be president still? Obviously, so he will continue to enjoy a sitting president's immunity from criminal suits. Erap keeps repeating that he has done nothing wrong and that he will prove himself innocent before the courts. So why does he not face the charges squarely and prove his innocence before the courts instead of trying to dodge them? Obviously, he knows he is guilty and that the court proceedings will prove that. Only a guilty person is afraid of a court trial. An innocent man wants the trial to proceed right away so he can prove his innocence and be free of suspicion as quickly as possible.

But Erap doesn't want to face the courts. He wants to be immune from suits. That is not the behavior of an innocent man.

It is more like the behavior of a guilty man wanting to escape justice. That is the only reason Erap wants the Supreme Court to declare him president still: so he can escape justice.

I don't understand why the Supreme Court needs 30 days to decide on the *quo warranto* petition before it when non-lawyers can plainly see what it is all about. And that to decide in favor of Erap would be a gross miscarriage of justice and a betrayal of the Filipino people. In doing so, the justices of the court of the last resort would let a felon escape punishment. They would send to the people the message that crime does pay, after all.

In the first place, *quo warranto* does not apply in Erap's case, according to lawyer Macapanton Abbas. *Quo warranto* is applicable only to public officials removable by operation of a law, he said. Presidents are removable by impeachment by the Senate, which is outside the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Therefore, Abbas said, the high court can immediately throw out the petition for lack of jurisdiction.

"The intent of the law over the letter of the law." "Substance over technicality."

These are hammered into the minds of students by law professors. Yet when practicing law themselves, these same professors use technicality to thwart justice. That Erap has not signed a formal letter of resignation is one such technicality. The intent of the Constitution is to replace a president who can no longer function or who no longer wants to be the president. While Erap still wants to retain the title of president, he can no longer function as such. He has no Cabinet members or Armed Forces or police to do his bidding. They are obeying the orders of the sitting President. The whole nation now accepts that President as its leader. The rest of the world recognizes her as the President of the Philippines. The Nobel Peace Prize Foundation even gave the Filipinos a prize for ousting Erap and installing Gloria in a peaceful revolution.

Upsetting this peaceful arrangement would let loose a Pandora's box of problems. In the words of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel to the magistrates: "Let sleeping dogs lie."

* * *

Do you know why officials of the Macapagal administration want Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura to resign? Because two camp followers—one, a former Bangko Sentral governor and the other a perennial aspirant—want the job for themselves. Buenaventura has not been charged in any scam or act of graft. But he is suspected of having tipped off then President Estrada that Urban Bank was declaring a bank holiday so Estrada was able to withdraw his multimillion deposits to the detriment of other depositors a day before the bank closed.

Because this is just a suspicion which they know cannot be provén to merit his impeachment—being a constitutional officer with a fixed tenure—they want Buenaventura to make it easy for them and resign. *Ano, balê?*

Note that nobody else is being blamed for tipping off Erap, only Buenaventura, the only reason being that as Bangko Sentral governor, he probably knew. Why Buenaventura? Because it is he who is sitting on the job they want. They can't even hope for the job of Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo who was head of Urbancorp Investments Inc. whose "garbage receivables" bought by Urban Bank, brought the bank down. Romulo must have known that UII and Urban Bank were in trouble and could be the tipster himself. They do not want the job of former President Fidel V. Ramos as roving ambassador (FVR wants it so he can travel at government expense as he did when he was president), although he was chair emeritus of Urban Bank and therefore must have known the precarious situation of the bank. Yet they are not being accused of having tipped off Erap in spite of the fact that they were in a position to know confidential information about it.

In fact, according to a paper from the Bangko Sentral, it is possible that Arsenio Bartolome himself, chair of Urban Bank, "could have unwittingly tipped off President Estrada. He was at the Department of Finance anniversary in Malacañang on April 24, the day before the bank holiday, and he told the guests at his table that he saw the President earlier to ask for help by allowing GSIS and SSS to invest in a troubled bank. Indeed, the person with the best motive to tip off a big client would be the head of the institution or the officer who solicited the account."

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THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SAW Chikoy Pura last Saturday night during their gig at Bistro '70s and he told me an untold story about People Power II. Unbeknownst to the public, he said, the activists had gotten in touch with their mass bases in various parts of the country as early as 1999 to mount long marches and caravans to pressure Erap to resign. This was at the height of Erap's fight with the INQUIRER and the PAL unions. The long marches and caravans would have made Mike Velarde's Saturday night outs with his flock at the Luneta look like a beerhouse on a Sunday night. But the plan was overtaken by events.

None of it is true. We were just kidding around. I was asking Chikoy why he wasn't at the Edsa Shrine that night regaling the crowd with song. I knew his band to be recording artists of Star and the event that night was sponsored by ABS-CBN. Chikoy and bass player Edwin Aguilar had been *sukis* in the rallies last year, playing their hearts out to the crowd long before it swelled to the shining sea that was Edsa II. Chikoy had even composed a song about the "acting president." "*Kunyari presidente,*" his punch line went.

Why weren't they singing at the Edsa Shrine? "Because," Chikoy said, laughing his eternal laugh, "nobody invited us."

Our talk then turned to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's speech at the Copa, the one where she revealed that she had been talking to five different military groups as far back as January last year, all of whom were planning to withdraw support from Erap. And Chikoy said, still laughing his eternal laugh, "*Ano kaya*, we told our own 'untold stories' about People Power II?" And he came out, with some prodding on my part, with that one-part invention above.

Good point, and one that says something vitally important beneath the levity. But of course it's the easiest thing in the world to tell stories of heroism after the fact. You don't risk life and limb doing so, you risk only embarrassment, if anyone is left with the energy and spit to refute it.

Maybe Gloria's tale is true, maybe not. Who the hell cares? It doesn't add anything to her cause while at that. All her version of history suggests is that she was really *atat na atat* to usurp power and was entertaining the thought as far back as January last year. The word *is* "usurp," for what was needed at the time was not a secret plot to oust Erap but open protest against his conduct in office. Not clandestine moves to subvert his power but transparent efforts to show the public he had lost the right to rule. Erap *was* the duly elected president of this country, and one who got an unprecedented mandate from the people. Only the people had the right to remove him from office—which they did last month—not a vice president and a cabal of military officers passing judgment on his unfitness to rule. The first is true People Power, the second is a mere putsch.

None of that moving furtively in the shadows, real or not, will change the fact that Gloria was totally, abysmally, deafeningly silent while Erap was turning the country into a gambling den, despite begging, pleading, importuning from the public for her to take a stand. That was all that was needed then—moral indictment of the regime in the court of public opinion. And she could not give it.

What makes Gloria's "untold tale" doubly irritating is that it makes the military the unsung heroes of People Power II. The first time she essayed this line, which was during her inauguration, I thought I could just chalk it up to the euphoria of victory. It wasn't easy to see things in perspective at the time, given the sudden, dazzling, unexpected turn of events. So she had remembered to thank the generals while forgetting to thank the foot soldiers, the activists, the NGOs, the POs, who had been there before them. Indeed, in spite of them: Wasn't Angelo Reyes, the AFP chief Gloria would extol to high heavens, the same fellow who sat with Panfilo Lacson, Alexander Aguirre and other assholes in uniform threatening ralliers with the wrath of God if they should presumably persist in their anarchy?

But, no, it did not end there. That was the tune Gloria would sing again and again long after the brain-addling effects of the euphoria had died down. In the camps, which she visited posthaste; in the PMA, which she went into while all of Baguio reveled in the festival of the flowers; at the Copa last week. That tune had the same refrain: Unbeknownst to the public, the men in uniform had been toiling in the night, under her supervision, to rescue them from the ogre in Malacañang.

I do think there were honest men and women in the AFP who could not abide the corruption and abuses of the Erap administration. I do think there were conscientious men and women in the AFP who tried to do something about them. Last month, Navy Commander Renan Suarez sent me a very thoughtful (and extremely well written) letter reminding me of the fact. I do take his reminder to heart. But for the same reason—which is to give credit where credit is due—I must continue to protest the undue importance Gloria and the generals are giving the military in the ousting of Erap. Juan Ponce Enrile and Fidel Ramos already did that once, in Edsa I, portraying themselves as the saviors of the people instead of the group the people plucked from the jaws of death. They may not do it again.

For the same reason, I must continue to protest the lack of importance given the activists, the NGOs and the POs who truly had toiled in the night, when everyone was busy dealing with Erap or standing in awe of him, and so made it possible to end his tyranny. For the same reason, I must protest their relegation to a miscellaneous item, an addendum, an obscure collectivity to include in the abstract phrase "and all the others who made People Power II possible." They were there first, they should stand on the stage first.

It is more than credit-taking, as I said before, it is telling the truth about what happened. It is telling the story, it is writing history, it is remembering the past: three ways of saying the same thing, all of them suggesting the weight of the enterprise. The urban poor groups, the women's groups, the voluntary and civic groups are lost in the reckoning of history, they will be lost in the reckoning of power. They are lost in the reckoning of the tale, they will be lost in the reckoning of life. They will be kept out of the cold, unable to regale the public with song simply because nobody thought to invite them.

It's time we told their story. As to Gloria's and the others' untold stories, their untold stories are best left untold.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

An issue deemed better left unsaid by SC

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

A NUMBER of citizens have told this columnist how disheartened they were by the Supreme Court's assertion that it did not issue a resolution last Jan. 20 declaring the presidency vacant. Does it mean that the high magistrates are flip-flopping? Will the Supreme Court bring back the disgraced President Estrada? What about this issue of "two presidents"? Many citizens, in fact, are nervous about the forthcoming Supreme Court decision on the legitimacy of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

I submit that we can all relax. Estrada knows that returning to Malacañang is now wishful thinking. His lawyers know it too, judging from the recent hearings at the high court on the "legitimacy" issue and whether Estrada's "incapacity" is "permanent" or "temporary," as his lawyers claim. During the deliberations, a Supreme Court justice queried Estrada lawyer Pacifico Agabin: Do you see Mr. Estrada taking over the presidency in the near future? No, replied the lawyer. "How long, then, is 'temporary'?" the jurist queried. Agabin said he couldn't say. The jurist pursued it further: "Will it last until the end of his term (2004)?" Agabin said "yes."

If Estrada's incapacity will last until his term's end, then it is permanent. From that exchange it was obvious that all his camp is interested in is for Estrada to be recognized as "on leave" so that he could enjoy immunity from suits as sitting president. The Supreme Court, however, is expected to make a definitive ruling on this, and I hazard that it will recognize Ms Macapagal once and for all, and that the plunder cases against Estrada will then move.

* * *

Did the Supreme Court flip-flop when it asserted last week that it never issued a resolution declaring the presidency vacant? Actually, it never did and didn't have to, and in fact this issue of a vacancy was never discussed in the oral arguments before the Supreme Court, as the lawyers realized that the power to determine a vacancy in the presidency does not belong to the Supreme Court. The confusion about "vacancy" arose when Presidential Chief of Staff Rene Corona was quoted as saying that a Supreme Court resolution had declared it; this was not accurate, for all that the resolution of Jan. 22 did was to affirm the authority of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to swear in Vice President Macapagal as President.

* * *

It is obvious that Davide went out on a limb in administering that oath to Ms Macapagal, as he feared that a vacuum could ensue from the inability of Estrada to govern, following the withdrawal of support from the majority of his Cabinet members and the military and police. What the Supreme Court merely did was to concur with Davide's action. For it to admit that it issued a resolution about a vacancy would be, as one jurist put it, "putting the jurists' necks on the guillotine already." But while the Supreme Court never said there was a vacancy, its recognition of this was implied when Davide, armed with his court's authority, administered the oath to Ms Macapagal. Why administer it if the post was not vacant? But obviously, in the court's opinion, that question was better left unsaid.

* * *

Prudence dictated that Davide and Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban, who worked closely with him on the swearing-in of Ms Macapagal, inhibit themselves from the Supreme Court's deliberations on the issue of the "legitimacy" of Ms Macapagal. This, doubtless, was to prevent any claim that the Supreme Court proceedings are "tainted." But in choosing to inhibit themselves, the Supreme Court chief and his associate reduced the number of justices now deliberating to 13—a number that the superstitious Estrada dislikes. Recall how he refused to be called the 13th President of the Republic, as *malas daw iyon. Mamalasin kaya si* Erap *muli sa* Supreme Court decision?

By the way, an indication of how personal Estrada viewed everything was his recent statement on Davide: "I appointed him Chief Justice, but he did not try to protect me."

* * *

"Watch me take off," said Dick Gordon, 55, to the media women over dinner at a Makati restaurant the other week. It is said that Gordon is so good at selling that he could sell a refrigerator to an Eskimo or the shirt on your back—to you. One can get carried away by his enthusiasm—an element badly needed to rev up the tourism industry today. Our session was meant as a look-see at tourism's many problems, but he also wanted to pick our minds on what ought to be done for the P700-million tourism department. "*Tulungan ninyo ako dito,*" he said. He admitted that among the big problems are the perception that Manila is unsafe for tourists, the garbage, the sleazy taxis, etc. Gordon has his own problems with Senate President Nene Pimentel, who has vowed to stop him at the Commission on Appointments due to cases against him.

* * *

Queried about this, Gordon said he doesn't know what those cases are as he has not received any papers on them. But he's not letting the Pimentel problem daunt him. Since his appointment, Gordon has hit the ground running in an effort to jack up tourist arrivals. He invaded Hong Kong for talks with travel industry and business leaders there and plans to attend the big conference of international travel boards in Berlin next week. At our dinner he was very concerned about the garbage dumped all over the city, stressing how he had to borrow trucks from his wife, Olongapo Mayor Kate Gordon, to get the Metro Manila garbage moving. He put a 24-hour watch at the Department of Tourism and activated its webpage, so that tourists in distress could get help (the DOT should publish its distress numbers). "Our message is 'We're ready to take care of you.'"

* * *

Gordon spoke of many plans, but it was more like thinking off the top of his head. He wants to liberalize the skies to enable the Philippines to link up with other destinations so that we could pull some of the huge tourist traffic from Hong Kong or Bangkok. But he stressed that liberalizing the skies does not mean junking Lucio Tan's PAL, promising to "try to get a good deal for him." The Luneta Boardwalk project of former Philippine Tourism Authority boss Lito Banayo is a joint venture between the government and the private sector; but Gordon now wants it more private sector-driven so that the PTA funds could be channeled to Intramuros, which will be big in DOT's promotion scheme.

* * *

We complained about the $1 fee for airport carts which, he admitted, does not go to the government. If the government would profit from the rental, says Gordon, it ought to continue, stressing that the huge collections could go to the relocation of the squatters in the airport area. Gordon is working on the airport taxis, so that accredited ones will be clean, safe, reliable and have uniformed drivers who will charge a fixed rate for baggage. It will be largely self-regulation by the taxi operators. He wants to make things "predictable" for tourists in terms of food, lodging and other essentials. The local hotel association wants the registration of hotels to revert to the DOT from the local governments.

What is this country's biggest asset that should attract tourists? "The smiles and the friendliness of the people," he said.

Don't sign it, Madame President!

LETTER FROM MINDANAO

Carolyn O. Arguillas

MALACAÑANG has been making pronouncements about the plebiscite in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao being held on May 14 and ARMM elections in September.

But while the consolidated bill passed by Congress before it adjourned this month provides for the plebiscite coverage and questions, it did not specify the date of the plebiscite.

Under the 1996 peace pact between government and the Moro National Liberation Front, Congress is supposed to amend or repeal the Organic Act creating the ARMM to pave the way for its expansion into 14 provinces and 10 cities (now 15 provinces with Sibugay carved out of Zamboanga del Sur and 13 cities with Digos, Tacurong and Koronadal now cities), hold a plebiscite to determine which areas would form part of the new autonomous region, then call for regional elections in the areas that voted for inclusion.

The new Organic Act, however, does not state the date of the plebiscite. And only Congress can set the plebiscite date.

Macapanton Abbas Jr., lawyer for the MNLF and a candidate for ARMM governor, wrote President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, urging her to veto the bill because if the President signs that into law, the new Organic Act "cannot be submitted to a plebiscite because of the omission of the date of the plebiscite."

"It is therefore clear that since the new Organic Act will not became a law in the absence of the plebiscite, then the resetting of the ARMM elections to September 2001 does not come into effect," Abbas said.

In the absence of a plebiscite, RA 8953 passed last year to synchronize the ARMM elections to May 14, 2001 "is the law that must be enforced by the Commission of Elections," he said. Obviously, that should be the law to govern this year's ARMM polls. The ARMM elections should push through as scheduled on May 14.

ARMM Gov. Nur Misuari's three-year term has been extended thrice—the first in September 1999 when his term was extended to March to ensure him a complete three-year term (he was elected September 1996; the regular March regional election that year was reset to September because government was waiting for the forging of a peace pact with the MNLF). The peace pact was signed Sept. 2, 1996; the ARMM elections, a week later.

In March 2000, Misuari's term was again extended to Sept. 30 because the amendatory bill was not passed. In September last year, Misuari's term was again extended to June 30 this year, to give time for the passage of the amendatory bill.

Juetengate, however, got in the way, so a thorough discussion on the amendatory bills (from the House and the Senate) could not be had until everyone rushed its passage before Congress adjourned early this month.

The proposed new Organic Act, however, is not acceptable to the MNLF which says it is a watered-down version of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement and will "render the new autonomous government less autonomous than the present autonomous government."

The House version of the amendatory bill was offered by the government peace panel to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front last year as its political package for "genuine autonomy," but the MILF also rejected the "package."

But it is not only these two groups that are rejecting the amendatory bill. A comparison of the peace pact and the bill would, indeed, show, it is a watered-down version of the peace pact. If the amendatory bill is to be subjected to a plebiscite now, it is likely it will be rejected by the majority.

How many provinces and cities will join the new autonomous government, pray tell?

If the results of the plebiscite will not be acceptable to the MNLF, it will again cry "violation" of the 1996 peace pact. What happened to the 1976 Tripoli Agreement is likely to happen again to the 1996 peace pact.

With government negotiating peace with the MILF, it cannot afford the collapse of the 1996 peace pact.

What appears to be a better approach is for the election of ARMM governor, vice governor and 21 regional assembly representatives from the ARMM provinces of Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, to push through on May 14.

Now what to do with Misuari? He can be named special envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference or ambassador to any of the 56-country OIC.

After all, Misuari's over four-year stay as governor is more than enough proof he does not have the talent for administration and governance. And it's not just for lack of funds. Misuari, who has known all the OIC secretary generals and heads of state since the OIC was set up in the early '70s, can serve the Bangsamoro people and the country better in an ambassadorial post than in governing a regional autonomy or administering a council.

Let the new set of ARMM officials serve until 2004. The three-year period should give government, the MNLF and the MILF enough time to make things work for the benefit of all.

Within the three-year period, Congress should pass a better version of the amendatory bill, one that would truly reflect the aspirations of the Bangsamoro people, incorporating what may be agreed upon in the government-MILF peace talks (whatever agreement is reached will, in a number of aspects, still require congressional action). Within this period, too, government should accept the fact that the mediation of the OIC is necessary. The MILF has said it would prefer the mediation of the OIC, a preference that was absent in the peace talks under Ramos and Estrada.

Dr. Macapado Muslim, chancellor of the Mindanao State University in General Santos City, last year submitted a proposal to Malacañang on how to come up with a "comprehensive, linked-up, two-track peace agreement" that would incorporate the GRP-MNLF and GRP-MILF peace agreements. Muslim's paper is important in that it focuses on both the MNLF and the MILF. The Estrada administration, however, ignored the proposal.

Muslim's thesis is that the marginalization and minoritization of the Bangsamoro people will lead to a continuing Moro struggle. What is needed, he said, is for conflict management interventions such as peace process, economic capability-building, political capability-building, socio-cultural capability-building and security/protection capability-building.

* * *

UP Mindanao is in good hands. Congratulations to the new UP Mindanao chancellor, Ricky de Ungria.

Human genome, protean man

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

HUMAN biology's equivalent of the moon race seems to have finished in a dead heat recently. The two principal competitors, publicly funded International Human Genome Project and private enterprise Celera Corp. each "published" their respective genetic recipes, for how to make a human being, in the prestigious journals Nature and Science, just one day apart.

This was such big news recently, that it even made the front page of the INQUIRER, which has not featured much foreign news on the front page during the recent political crises. But don't rush out, just yet, to order that genius-movie star-philosopher designer baby. As with all "major advances in medicine and science," the announcement of the accomplishments come with the usual disclaimer that it may take years before practical results and benefits are seen at affordable prices.

I think that the very concept of genes is mildly threatening to most people, because we conceive of them as little biological computer programs that fashion and shape our beings and personalities, and over which we have no real control. But it turns out genes are not so inexorably deterministic. They make the protein that makes you up, but not the personality that you have, or your morals. Nevertheless, it is impossible to resist contemplating how much more personality and morals one might have with human progeny designed to be physically, if not spiritually beautiful, at least to the beholding parents, or resistant to most life-limiting diseases and conditions. The commercial possibilities of such contemplated bio-industries are potentially enormous.

I wanted to find out more about what had actually been accomplished and discovered some interesting results of the research, particularly from the press conference speeches of Celera's president and chief science officer, Craig Venter, and Francis Collins, leader of the publicly funded project.

In his keynote speech, Collins of the International Human Genome Project noted the surprisingly small number of genes that compose the so-called human genome, about 30,000—said to be only twice as many as in a common flat or round worm, and just about as many as in a mustard plant (*mustasa*).

Previously, it was thought that the human genome would be composed of about 100,000 genes, a bigger field from which to develop highly profitable DNA pharmaceuticals for a host of human diseases. Biotech-driven pharmaceutical and designer drug companies still expect to reap a bonanza from the research because it will speed the development of new cures for old afflictions. Also, Collins said it appeared human genes are capable of producing a wider variety of proteins than the genes of lower life forms. But I doubt whether we shall see any time soon, something to cure stupidity, or vanity, or envy, or greed.

Well at least, all this seems to make the parable of the mustard seed in the Bible eerily prescient, that from mere double-twisted molecules should arise poets, popes, kings and presidents, and ordinary men, all in their saintly, roguish and protean varieties.

But I was a little astonished at the comparison to flat worm genomes. It seems to me that human beings ought to have more than twice as many instructions for self-manufacture and growth than a nematode worm. Maybe the scientists are wrong. Or are they? On second thought, that could explain the bizarre twists and turns of Filipino national history where nefarious low life that have gotten to occupy high positions. But then, would our tendency to choose and abide by such leaders as Marcos and Erap also be a genetic predisposition? Is there in fact a gene for being a Filipino, with all our traits, good and bad?

The scientists say that their assays of the human genome prove that race is indeed only skin deep. Collins said, "There is no scientific basis for precise racial categories" at the DNA level. No specific gene for being a Filipino, or African, or Chinese, or Latino, or Anglo. A donor from each race (except for the Filipino) was included in the Celera project. (It was rumored that Venter himself was one of the two white male donors.) But based on their results, we human beings are said to be 99.9 percent identical in genetic make-up. I thought, well and good, but it is wonderful that people actually turn out to be 99.9 percent different and therefore, interesting, despite uniformity at the start.

But this observation should also lay to rest in anyone's mind that genes are in some sinister way deterministic of personality and character. I'm sure that there is no genetic predisposition in Filipinos to break the rule of law, to obstruct justice or to be greedy and corrupt, even if we habitually do these things. We do all these things by commission and omission, by habitual dereliction of our duties and abandonment of morals as citizens and leaders.

To paraphrase Shakespeare, we could say that "The fault lies not in our genes, but in ourselves." Indeed we have to be believers in the corrigibility and perfectibility of human beings and societies, at least in successive approximations, no matter what the genetic or social predispositions. Otherwise, why would we undertake such laborious and suspenseful enterprises as peaceful people power revolutions, not once, but twice to rid the nation of a tyrant first, then a corrupt president? But getting rid of Marcos and Erap was the easy part. Now, the hard part begins. Now we must build, not just destroy.

Disclosures

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

WITH THE RECENT signing into law of the Fair Election Act, new rules and regulations have been laid down by the government to guide the print and broadcast media in their coverage of the May 14 polls.

The law states in its declaration of principles that "the State shall, during the election period, guarantee or ensure the equal opportunity for access to media time and space, and the equitable right to reply, for public information campaigns and fora among candidates and assure free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible elections."

The provisions that directly affect the INQUIRER, and newspapers in general, insofar as the editorial aspect is concerned are those that relate to surveys, news reports and continued engagement of staff members who are candidates for elective positions.

Except for the timing of the publication, newspapers are free to publish the results of surveys about the candidates' popularity, qualifications, platform and voters' preferences.

In publishing the surveys, however, the newspapers are required to give background information on the poll taken, such as, the identity of the person who commissioned the survey, who conducted it, the period of coverage and its margin of error.

Surveys affecting national candidates cannot be published 15 days prior to the election, while those affecting local candidates are barred from publication seven days before. So for the May 14 polls, the last day to publish surveys for the senatorial hopefuls is April 28; for congressmen and other local officials the cut-off date is May 6.

With regard to news reporting, the law requires all members of media, television, radio or print to "scrupulously report and interpret the news, taking care not to suppress essential facts nor to distort the truth by omission or improper emphasis. He shall recognize the duty to air the other side and the duty to correct substantive errors promptly."

Subliminally, the law is telling media that in the exercise of speech and press freedoms they have an obligation to be fair and impartial in the presentation of the news about the candidates or their views.

Implicit in the admonition is the lawmakers' apprehension that candidates who have easy access to or have good connections with the media will take advantage of that relationship to unduly, if not unfairly, promote their candidacies.

Columnist

Article 6.6 of the Fair Election Act is particularly significant to the INQUIRER. It provides that "any mass media columnist, commentator, announcer, reporter, on-air correspondent or personality who is a candidate for any elective public office or is a campaign volunteer for or employed or retained in any capacity by any candidate or political party shall be deemed resigned, if so required by their employer, or shall take a leave of absence from his/her work as such during the campaign period."

Stripped of its legal gobbledygook, it simply means that if you are connected with any media outlet that allows your exposure to the public and you are running for an elective office, or is employed by any candidate or political party, you should quit your job or take a vacation until the elections are over.

The "resign or go on leave" provision is aimed at preventing media personalities who have filed their certificates of candidacy from taking advantage of their position in promoting their political aspirations.

While other candidates have to pay for or scrounge for advertisements to project themselves to the electorate, the candidate-media person has only to sit behind the TV camera or radio microphone or write a newspaper column and he gets, free of charge, effective public exposure.

In compliance with this provision, INQUIRER columnist Solita "Winnie" Monsod has ended her once-a-week "Get Real" column. The feisty former head of the National Economic and Development Authority during the Aquino administration and TV host is running for senator under the People Power Coalition.

Reflecting her moral rectitude, Winnie did not wait for the INQUIRER to ask her to stop writing her popular one-year-old column when the Fair Election Act became effective. On her own, she informed the editor in chief that Feb. 24 will be the last time her column will grace the Op-Ed section of the newspaper. But she was too busy to write her piece.

The INQUIRER wishes Winnie the best of luck in her latest professional venture. The Senate will be enriched by her expertise in economics and finance in case she gains a slot in the Magic 13 this coming election.

So far, Winnie is the only member of the INQUIRER family who is covered by the law's prohibition on media personalities staying on their jobs while seeking elective positions:

In case any other columnist, reporter or correspondent of the newspaper throws his or her hat in the political ring for any elective position available this year or is employed by any candidate or political party, he or she will either be asked to resign or take a vacation until the May 14 political exercise is over.

Conflict of interest

Taking off from the prohibition on media personalities from using their positions for personal advantage, the INQUIRER will, starting today, disclose to the public information about any personal, business or professional ties that its columnists or opinion writers may have that, in the newspaper's judgment, may affect the objectivity of their opinions or comments.

If a columnist or writer is married to or a close relative of a high ranking official of a government office or private company, or has substantial interests in a particular business, or has a pending transaction with a government office or private company, or placed in a position that may, directly or indirectly, influence his or her views on an issue, the INQUIRER will disclose that information.

The disclosure will be published either in this column or the section where the column concerned appears. Like the disclosures that the Philippine Stock Exchange requires of companies listed in the local bourse, the published information will be made in the spirit of promoting transparency and objectivity in the views and opinions that appear in the columns and commentaries.

For starters, the INQUIRER discloses that "Political Tidbits" columnist Belinda Olivares-Cunanan, whose column appears four times a week, is married to Thelmo Cunanan, the president and chief executive officer of the Philippine National Oil Company.

On account of this relationship, Belinda has served notice to the editorial staff that she will refrain from commenting on issues that relate to energy or any other matter that, one way or the other, has a bearing on the work of her husband.

This column will be receptive to information from the readers about "conflict of interest" situations that any of its columnists or opinion writers may be involved. If the conflict of interest is independently confirmed by the newspaper, the proper disclosure will be made as soon as possible.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City." Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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LETTERS

Fearless forecast

LET us all suppose that tonight the rumor mills will be rife with speculations that by a split decision, a sufficient majority of our Supreme Court justices are voting in favor of Joseph Estrada's petition to declare him as still the duly constituted President of the Philippines, albeit on voluntary leave of absence. Without delving into the legal, factual and constitutional issues and reasons to be cited by such a majority, let's presume further that the law is what the Supreme Court will have said it is—rightly or wrongly in favor of Estrada. And that by tomorrow noontime, the Court will have formally announced such a historic decision.

With the above presumed scenario, I would make the following "fearless forecast" as to the chaotic aftermath that will most probably ensue as early as the first night of the rumors.

(1) A few thousand anti-Erap texters will have started spreading the rumors of such an impending and shocking development, so that by midnight and with the help of radio and TV, the first waves of protesters will have gathered once again at the Edsa Shrine premises. It will be a reprise of last Jan. 16's midnight gathering at the Shrine, but this time; the collective rage level will have escalated at least 10 times over in emotional heat and desire for revenge. At the same time, much larger than before militant pro-Erap crowd will also have deployed its own gathering hordes, even better funded and prepared to fight than before.

(2) By dawn the following day, while the Edsa Shrine crowd and pro-Erap supporters somewhere else, at Mendiola perhaps, respectively start to double in numbers, practically all the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police officers from captain to general ranks, will have started hundreds of small hush-hush meetings among themselves throughout the land. All of these meetings will be focused on what to do and whom to support, if the deafening rumors turn out to be true. And hundreds of equally contentious counterparts of Edsa all over Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will also be filling up with provincial protesters, for and against Estrada.

(3) By eleven o'clock in the morning of the following day, when the rumors shall have been more or less confirmed by Supreme Court insiders, the local stock market and foreign exchange trading indices will have melted down to historically bearish subterranean levels.

(4) An hour after the Supreme Court's formal announcement of Estrada's legal victory in the early afternoon hours, all vehicular traffic would be paralyzed along most major streets in Makati, Manila and Quezon City. They will all be embroiled with volcanically angry anti-Erap hordes and a wildly celebrating and taunting pro-Erap crowd. They will all be out on the streets, ready to take on each other with thousands of police vainly trying to keep the peace. What actually happened along Taft Avenue and Padre Faura Street near the Supreme Court between two such rival groups last Feb. 15, is but a micro-foretaste of the real thing if it does happen.

(5) Unlike last January's Edsa Dos when they came to Manila at the last minute and in small numbers, this time around however, both pro-Erap and anti-Erap partisans will be descending from the provinces by the tens of thousands, thereby adding more possible mayhem to the chaotic brew.

Even with just the above five opening scenes, which already happened last January and which will surely be repeated if the Supreme Court obliges, but in geometric multiples of increments in scope and intensity, wouldn't complete nationwide chaos not follow soon after?

That is why I believe that the Supreme Court justices are also aware of these possibilities. And so in addition to the factual, legal and constitutional realities that mostly favor President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the fact that chaos will follow if these overwhelming arguments are unwisely rejected, I do not see any significant probability of a Supreme Court decision coming out in favor of Estrada. I could be wrong, I hope not! Otherwise the old prophet Jeremiah ought to be around, this time soon. For the epilogue could be in the persons of Rene Saguisag who will either have been lynched and lapidated, or elevated as Erap Estrada's new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and Dulce Saguisag as Vicky Garchitorena's Presidential Management Staff replacement at the Palace.—**EDUARDO B. OLAGUER, Aurora Milestone Building, 1045 Aurora Boulevard, Quezon City 1108**

The quality of local movies

I REALLY can't suppress my disgust at what the local movie industry has been in the past and still is even after the nation's heroic Edsa II exploit—a virtual factory of porno flicks with nothing but libidinous themes.

A current review of movie titles (from Jan. 15 to date) tells it all: "Booba," "Syota ng Bayan," "Balahibong Pusa," "Alindog ni Barbara," "Paligayahin Mo Ako," "Akin Ka Ngayong Gabi," "The Virgin Wife," "Vital Parts," "Ika-Pitong Glorya sa Lupa," "Gusto Sa Lalaki," "Live Show," "Tukso ng Panahon," "Malikot Ang Agos," "Sambahin Ang Puri Mo," "Laro sa Baga," "Tuhog," "Sex Bomb," "Kangkong" (Brigette de Joya—*ang pinaka*-liberated *na* bold star), "Eskort," "Hapdi," "Gatas sa Dibdib ng Kaaway," "Biyak Na Gubat," "Sa Iyong Mga Haplos."

Need any more proof?

Panginoon! Ito lang ba ang kaya ng utak ng mga nasa local movie industry? *Pawang kalibugan! Nakakahiya!*

If these titles are viewed side by side with English films, most of which obviously have serious plots, the exercise is totally revolting.

Can't somebody do something? The newly installed President? The Church? The lawmakers? The cause-oriented groups?—**BENJAMIN L. SIM, 30 Scout Tuazon St., Quezon City**

Should we still trust Enrile?

I READ Former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara's account of the last days of the Estrada administration and I was surprised to note that he was saying that he saw Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile in Malacañang. This is surprising since during the height of Edsa II, I heard Enrile being interviewed by ABS-CBN and he was saying he did not go to Malacañang and he was home all the time. I could not help but wonder again how he can lie to the Filipino people just like he did during martial law.

Should we vote for this kind of person especially when he is one of the people who voted "no" to the opening of the second envelope? The Filipino people should think twice or else we will not attain progress with this kind of lawmaker around.—**CHRISTOPHER M. DAR, cd68@pinoymail.com**

Saguisag's duty

ANYONE may condemn or even jeer Rene Saguisag for handling the unpopular and seemingly hopeless case of ousted President Joseph Estrada in the Supreme Court.

But from the point of view of law practitioners, Saguisag is correct.

For Saguisag's stature, his having handled the cases of Estrada is more a duty to defend an accused as lawyer rather than a matter of choice. Otherwise, if every unpopular litigation could compel lawyers to desist from handling it, then justice itself would end up a farce and the lawyers' oath a sham.

Lest I might be misunderstood, as a member of the then opposition in the House, I signed the impeachment complaint against Estrada and voted in the plenary in favor of the impeachment lodged in the Senate.—**REP. RENATO V. LEVISTE, First District, Oriental Mindoro**

Education and wisdom not synonymous

SPITTING venom over late-night TV last Feb. 12, the nation's most vociferous senator, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, was in her element and at her most churlish, calling all Filipinos uneducated ("*hindi man lang nakapasa o nakatungtong ng UP*") and branding us all as "anonymous little insects" and "inferior life forms" unworthy of her attention.

She ranted and said that the only persons whose opinions she values are her professors at Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge! She also announced, in case someone should miss the point, that she now carries a gun, not only to "protect" herself from those who would threaten her physically, but also from those who may besmirch her reputation, as "allowed" by the Constitution.

Has the senator ever listened to herself speak? One doesn't have to hold a law degree from the University of the Philippines to suspect that her unspeakable accent could invite the scorn of the very persons—the Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge professors—whose opinions she so highly esteems!

Where does she get the gall to seek another term and ask for the vote of the very same people she contemptuously dismisses as "anonymous little insects" and "insignificant life forms"?

Perhaps we should feel sorry for Santiago. She is obviously suffering from poor self-image, judging by her delusions of grandeur! She has a scholarly vocabulary, but the mouth of a fishmonger. She is masquerading as an intellectual giant and a spoiled brat throwing a tantrum. She is living proof that education and wisdom are not necessarily synonymous!

Instead of being returned to the august halls of the Senate by the voters, may she rot in the rubbish heap of history where she and the likes of her, who pry on the gullibility and cupidity of the Filipino *masa*, belong!—**BLANCHE G. GALLARDO, LYDIA D. CASTILLO, EVELYN PEPLOW, DETTE PASCUAL, AIDA D'ORAZIO, SALUD IBAÑEZ AND CHITA ALMARIO, Unit 211, Eisenhower Tower, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila**

Clarification on care of child rebels

I WOULD like to clarify and contextualize your story titled, "DSWD opposes military custody of child rebels." (PDI, 2/19/01)

During my visit to Camp Evangelista in Cagayan de Oro, I had a dialogue with the military and these children, one of whom is Jelyn. The military told me that they are providing the children with scholarship and the children likewise acknowledged the military's assistance including the security being provided them.

Director Leticia Gumbao of the Department of Social Welfare and Development-Region 10 also informed me that it released Jelyn to her parents in Caraga when she turned 18 last year. She will be 19 this March and as such, no longer under DSWD custody since she is no longer a minor. I was informed that her stay in the military camp was her own decision. Another girl is also 18 years old and is in college. Three other minors are in the camp because their mother, who works in the military, prefers her children to be with her.

In our dialogue, the children articulated their desire to finish college and asked assistance from the government for this dream to be realized. We acknowledged the military's effort in supporting their education and we at the DSWD will be working with other agencies to provide for their educational needs.

We agreed that the DSWD-Region 10, the parents of the minors and the military will continuously work together so appropriate measures will be undertaken to ensure the children's welfare and security. The DSWD shall visit the children regularly and provide them counseling and other appropriate services. We are also working out plans for the children's eventual return to their communities. Moreover, I have also directed Director Gumbao to look into the children's request for the government to help the poor communities where they came from.—**CORAZON JULIANO SOLIMAN, secretary, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City**

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BORNEO SLAUGHTER

Mob of 1,000 hunt immigrants

SAMPIT, Indonesia—Driving past a headless body rotting in the street and the remains of their burned-out houses, thousands of refugees flocked Sunday to a port on Borneo Island desperate to escape marauding gangs intent on killing them.

A mob of around 1,000 native Dayaks armed with spears and machetes continued to hunt immigrants believed to be sheltering in forests around the town of Sampit in Central Kalimantan province.

Reporters traveling through the area saw three freshly killed bodies lying on the roadside. Two had been decapitated and one had its heart ripped out.

"I have eaten a bit of a person's heart," said one of the killers Fadfian Charles. "It gave me strength and I took his spirit."

At least 210 people have been slaughtered in the town during the past week. Local officials said the death toll could reach 1,000.

Earlier about 2,500 people managed to pile onto an Indonesian navy warship that arrived to evacuate them—the second refugee exodus in two days from the town of Sampit. Another ship was expected later in the day.

However, about 10,000 people failed to secure a place on the ship and were forced to take shelter at a squalid, makeshift camp outside a local police station while gangs of armed Dayak men roamed the town of Sampit, about 800 km northeast of Jakarta.

Several of the refugees lambasted Indonesia's security forces for failing to protect them and for not providing a safe passage out of the violence-wracked city.

"My two children are dead. They cut their heads off. They slaughtered my husband and dragged his body through the streets," said Suriya Fauzi, a refugee waiting to be evacuated. "The police and Army did nothing. They let this happen."

Despite two joint police and military battalions being dispatched to the region, few officers or soldiers could be seen patrolling the streets of Sampit.

At one police station, officers played chess as dozens of Dayaks set fire to the nearby houses of fleeing migrants, and a headless body lay only 100 meters up the road. Police say they have already arrested about 80 people.

In the first official response to the weeklong intercommunal conflict, Indonesia's top security minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and armed forces chief Adm. Widodo Adisutjipto toured the area.

"They (the security forces) are doing their best to stop the violence. We have deployed reinforcements," Yudhoyono told reporters. "We will control the situation and enforce the law."

However, as he spoke Dayak mobs were torching houses belonging to immigrants from Madura Island in the Central Kalimantan provincial capital of Palangkaraya.

Armed Dayaks were setting up and manning roadblocks, raising fears the violence may spread. Police said they were on full alert in the city, about 208 km away from Sampit Sampit Mayor Mohamed Wahyudi said at least 210 people have been slaughtered in and around the city since the fighting started on Feb. 18. But he said the killings had spread and it was not clear how many people had died in outlying villages. *AP*

Earthquakes rock Japan, Pakistan, El Salvador

ISLAMABAD—A strong earthquake rumbled through northern Pakistan, India and Afghanistan Sunday, rattling windows and frightening residents in the region.

The tremor, with a preliminary magnitude ranging from 5.8 to 6.5 was centered 700 km north of Islamabad in Faisabad, the capital of neighbor Afghanistan's northeastern Badakhshan province. It was felt throughout northern Pakistan, northern Indian states of Haryana and Punjab and much of northern Afghanistan. The quake comes just one month after a powerful quake shattered parts of India's western state of Gujarat.

In neighboring Afghanistan tremors were felt throughout much of the northern half of the country. In the Afghan capital of Kabul residents fled their homes. Witnesses said they prayed and shouted God is Great.

The earth also shook in northern Afghanistan's Badakhshan and Takhar provinces, where opposition troops rule.

Meanwhile, a strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.8 jolted northeastern Japan on Sunday morning, but there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries. Separately, hours later, a magnitude 4.3 quake shook Tokyo and nearby cities, causing no immediate damage or injuries.

The first quake struck at 9:54 a.m. (Manila time) just below the seabed off the coast of Fukushima prefecture (state), the Meteorological Agency said.

The temblor shook buildings but no damage or injuries have been reported, said a local police spokesperson on condition of anonymity. Fukushima is located 239 km northeast of Tokyo.

There was no danger of tsunami, or huge waves caused by undersea disturbances such as volcanic activity or earthquakes, the agency said.

Japan sits atop four tectonic plates—slabs of land that move across the earth's surface—making it one of the world's most earthquake-prone nations.

Another earthquake, measuring between 4.2 and 5.0 on the Richter scale, shook central El Salvador Saturday, sending thousands of residents of the capital and other towns running from office blocks and shopping centers in panic.

There were no immediate reports of injuries or casualties in this latest quake, felt across the central region of the country.

It measured 4.2 on the Richter scale and had its epicenter near the capital, according to the country's National Emergency Committee. Nicaragua's Territorial Studies Institute said it had recorded the quake as magnitude 5.0.

It struck at around 4:40 a.m. (Manila time) Saturday just 24 hours after another tremor, measuring 4.2 on the open-ended Richter scale, had been felt across the same area.

The psychological impact of this week's tremors has been strong, coming on the heels of two major earthquakes this year, and innumerable aftershocks felt by a now highly sensitized populations. *AFP/AP*

Koreas brace for 2nd round of reunions

SEOUL—For 50 years, Lee Jei-bae felt guilty for leaving behind his family when he fled from North to South Korea during the Korean War. Soon, he will have a chance to beg forgiveness from his wife and four children.

"I'm just thankful that they are alive to give me a chance to apologize before I die," said Lee, 82, one of the 100 South Koreans who will visit the North's capital, Pyongyang, from Monday to Wednesday to meet relatives they have not seen since the war.

The same number of North Koreans will fly to Seoul for similar reunions, the third such event since August. The reunions are an outgrowth of the first-ever inter-Korean summit in June at which leaders of the two countries pledged to work for reconciliation.

So far, the reunions have ended a lifetime of waiting for a tiny fraction of the millions of Koreans whose families were separated by the 1950-53 war.

Through Red Cross contacts, visitors from each side know who they can expect to meet during the joyful, yet anguished meetings.

South Korea selected its visitors to Pyongyang from 120,000 candidates through a computer lottery, giving priority to those who are older and have immediate family members in the North. *AP*

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0141, Series of 2001.

Solon wants anti-women book banned

TAIPEI—A Taiwanese lawmaker on Sunday urged bookstores to stop selling a Japanese cartoon book that portrayed Taiwanese women as having volunteered rather than being forced to work as sex slaves during World War II.

Burning copies of the book "Taiwan Discourse" and pictures of the author, outspoken New Party lawmaker Elmer Feng said the book distorted history with its Japanese militarist theories and "must be taken off the shelves."

"Booksellers can show it to the people and let them know about it, but the book must not be sold," Feng said at a protest in front of the Japan Interchange Association, Tokyo's de facto embassy in Taipei.

Like many other countries, Japan does not have any formal relations with Taiwan.

About 20 protesters joined Feng early Sunday, yelling anti-Japanese slogans and burning a poster of the Japanese flag. The poster with Japan's red sun emblem read, "Japan must apologize for this historical crime."

The cartoon book features a picture of smiling Taiwanese women in traditional Japanese garb eagerly lining up in front of a Japanese officer recruiting sex slaves, but no quotes from the hundreds of former "comfort women" who said their lives had been ruined.

The book about Taiwanese history also includes interviews with prominent Taiwanese figures deemed sympathetic to Japan.

Meanwhile, a group of women activists were collecting signatures outside the Taipei train station criticizing the book and encouraging the "comfort women" who have come forward in the past not to feel ashamed. The group had about 3,000 signatures. *AP*

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION
MAGALLANES DRIVE, INTRAMUROS
1002 MANILA

RE: DENIED VISA APPLICATIONS
x---x

ORDER No. ADD-01-001

For the period from July 1, 1998 up to January 31, 2001, the Bureau of Immigration (BI) denied 974 applications for different types of visa, the list of which is with the office of Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma, Executive Chairman, Board of Special Inquiry. Concerned foreigners/applicants are directed to take appropriate actions to maintain their lawful immigration status within fifteen (15) days from date of last publication. Failure to do so, the BI shall initiate deportation proceedings against them.

Publish this ORDER in three (3) newspapers of general circulation once (1) a week for four (4) consecutive weeks.

SO ORDERED.

12 February 2001

(Sgd.) ANDREA D. DOMINGO
Commissioner

February 20, 26, March 5 & 12, 2001 – Inquirer

Thousands rally to support Wahid

JAKARTA—Tens of thousands of demonstrators rallied in support of embattled president Abdurrahman Wahid Sunday as media reports quoted him as saying Indonesia could disintegrate unless attempts to unseat him end.

Police said as many as 20,000 Wahid supporters packed onto the streets of Madiun town in the president's home province of East Java, some 550 km west of Jakarta.

It is the latest in a series of pro-Wahid demonstrations since parliament officially censured the president earlier this month over his alleged role in two corruption scandals. The move is the first step toward possible impeachment.

"The demonstration is peaceful. The protesters are holding a mass prayer in the town square," said local police officer Sgt. Gunawan, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

Similar protests by Wahid loyalists this month have ended in violence.

Wahid has denied any wrongdoing in the graft affairs and has rejected calls to resign.

"Several legislators have been politicizing things to undermine the government and this could lead to the disintegration of the nation," Wahid was quoted by The Jakarta Post as saying.

His statement was distributed to journalists accompanying Wahid on a 15-day trip to Africa and the Middle East.

The president urged Indonesian legislators not to be "manipulated" in the current political climate. He did not elaborate.

Since Wahid flew abroad, vicious ethnic fighting has erupted in central Kalimantan province on Borneo Island, fueling fresh criticism of his administration.

The clashes, which have pitted indigenous Dayaks against settlers from elsewhere in the country, have so far claimed the lives of at least 210 people. *AP*

ZAPATISTA women with their young children look hopefully as members of the Zapatista Army from La Realidad, Chiapas, Mexico, depart for Mexico City in a historic "peace caravan." The commanders will march through 12 states on their way to the capital. AP

Mexican rebels begin peace caravan to city

SAN CRISTOBAL, Mexico—Mexico's enigmatic rebel leader "Subcom-mander Marcos" and hundreds of Zapatistas put down their weapons Saturday, as they prepared to begin their symbolic descent on Mexico City in a mass event that could herald the end of the Zapatista insurgency.

Marcos, who arrived here late Saturday, left his M16 rifle and 45 mm pistol with one of his Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) officers, "Major Moses" in La Realidad, a village in Zapatista territory in southern Mexico.

Tzotzil, Chole, Tzeltal and Tojolabal Indians and numerous members of non-government organizations began converging on the colonial-style town early Saturday. The caravan kicks off from here Sunday.

Mexican President Vicente Fox expressed hope the Zapatista 3,000-km march on the capital from the southern state of Chiapas will be a "bridge to peace."

"If the struggle is really for indigenous rights, we are all in the same struggle," he said in a radio address late Friday. The march would be "a bridge to peace to demand indigenous people's rights."

Upon his arrival in Mexico City, after the two-week hike through 13 Mexican states, Subcommander Marcos will lobby lawmakers to pass an indigenous-rights bill, which would likely guarantee a peace accord can be reached.

The planned "Zapatour" is as unusual as the insurgents who lead it. Since the original uprising left 150 people dead in 12 days of fighting, the Zapatistas have essentially swapped assault rifles for Internet-connected computers.

The cyber-guerrillas have not fired a single shot since Jan. 12, 1994, but have managed to remain a thorn in the side of the Mexican government, thanks largely to significant international support. *AFP*

Aussie PM in trouble as election fever rises

SYDNEY—Australian Prime Minister John Howard is in danger of seeing his government swept from office as voter sentiment turns sharply against him, new polls showed Sunday.

One of the major beneficiaries of voter disenchantment is Pauline Hanson's One Nation party, with its grab-bag of right-wing, anti-Asian immigration and anti-globalization policies.

Weekend opinion polls suggested that Howard's conservative coalition government could be unseated by the Kim Beazley-led Labor opposition at national elections due later this year.

Support for Howard has fallen markedly, even within the electorate he has held for 27 years, with the prime minister now facing the once unimaginable prospect of having to battle to retain his seat.

"That poll didn't surprise me in the slightest after the last couple of weeks, which have been, politically, the worst couple of weeks the government's had, certainly since its reelection," Howard told journalists during a visit to New Zealand.

He said that "any poll at the moment would be lousy and they're likely to be lousy for a while. That happens in politics."

The introduction of a goods and services tax (GST), high fuel prices, a weakening domestic economy and several political scandals have all lowered the Howard government's stock, the weekend polls found. *AFP*

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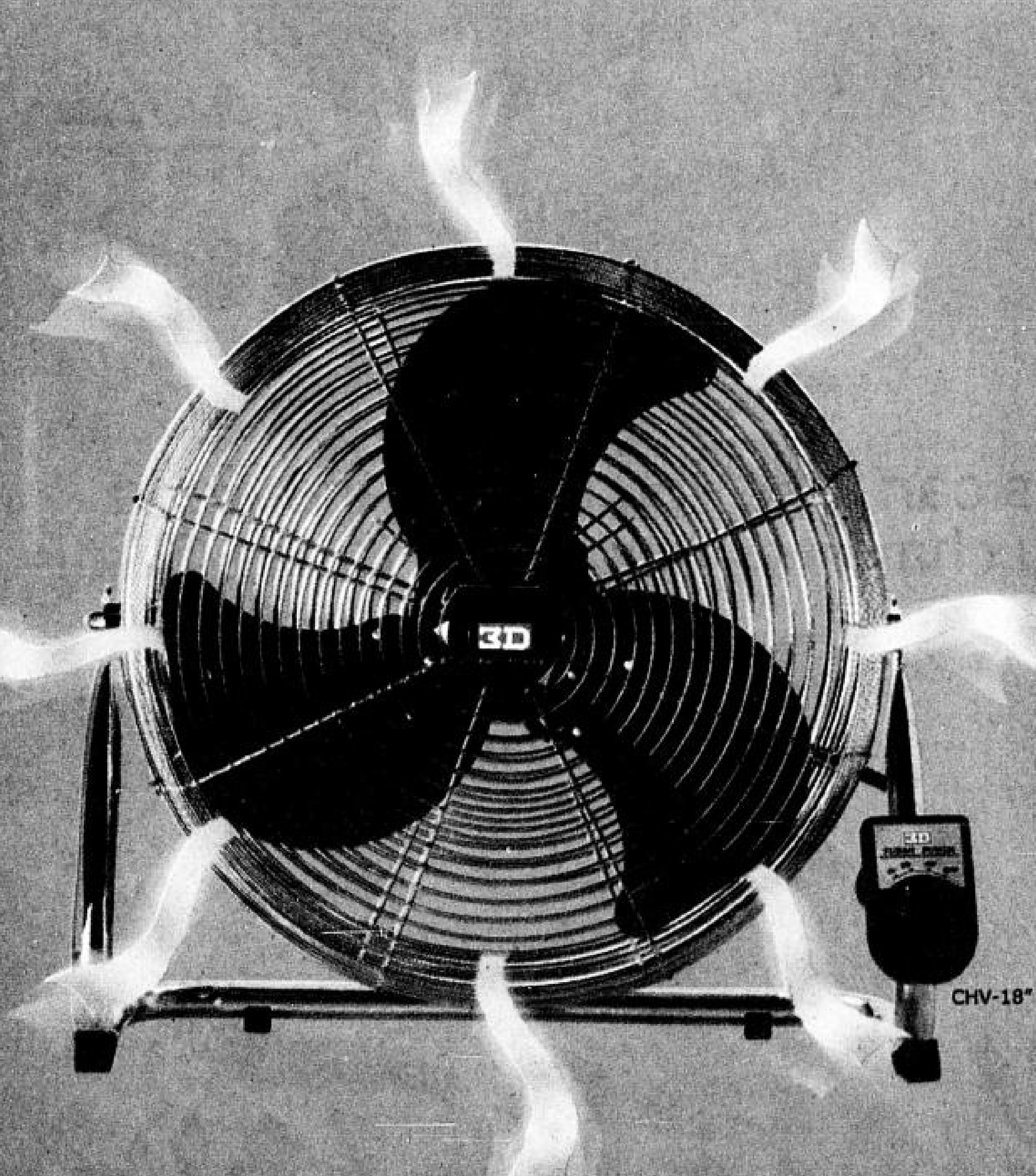

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Powell surprised by clamor of Arabs over Iraq bombing

CHANGE OF VENUE ADVISORY

Due to the fire that razed PICC, the venue of the second national education conference on learning styles scheduled on March 1 and 2, has been moved to the

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Center for Learning and Teaching Styles Philippines

JERUSALEM—US Secretary of State Colin Powell acknowledged Sunday that the bombing of Iraq by US and British warplanes was more "aggressive" than the usual retaliation and had stirred a surprising outcry in the Arab world.

But Powell said he had no apologies for retaliating to Iraqi harassment of US overflights.

At a news conference after meeting here with Israeli Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon, Powell said the attack could have been coordinated better in order not to inflame Arab sentiment.

"Our action was a little more aggressive than usual and got a little more attention," Powell said. "But I have no apologies."

Powell, meanwhile, apparently made no headway with Sharon and, on Saturday night with outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Barak, on persuading Israel to ease its economic curbs on the Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Sharon said Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat first must end violence against Israelis. "In order to ease the restrictions there are steps Chairman Arafat will have to take," he said.

Powell said he was "greatly disturbed" by the report on Israel's security he received Saturday night from Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz.

"It is a very dangerous situation," Powell said. "This is the time to bring calm to the region and to bring about security cooperation."

Sharon, underscoring their apparent accord on the issue, said Israel required "full security" and that while he maintained "pipelines" for messages to the Palestinian Authority there were no negotiations going on amid the violence.

From here, Powell went to Ramallah on the West Bank for talks with Arafat.

Responding to reports Iraq may be nearing development of nuclear weapons, Powell said it was all the more important to prevent Saddam Hussein from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

"Saddam Hussein is a threat to the nations of the region as well as Israel," he said. *AP*

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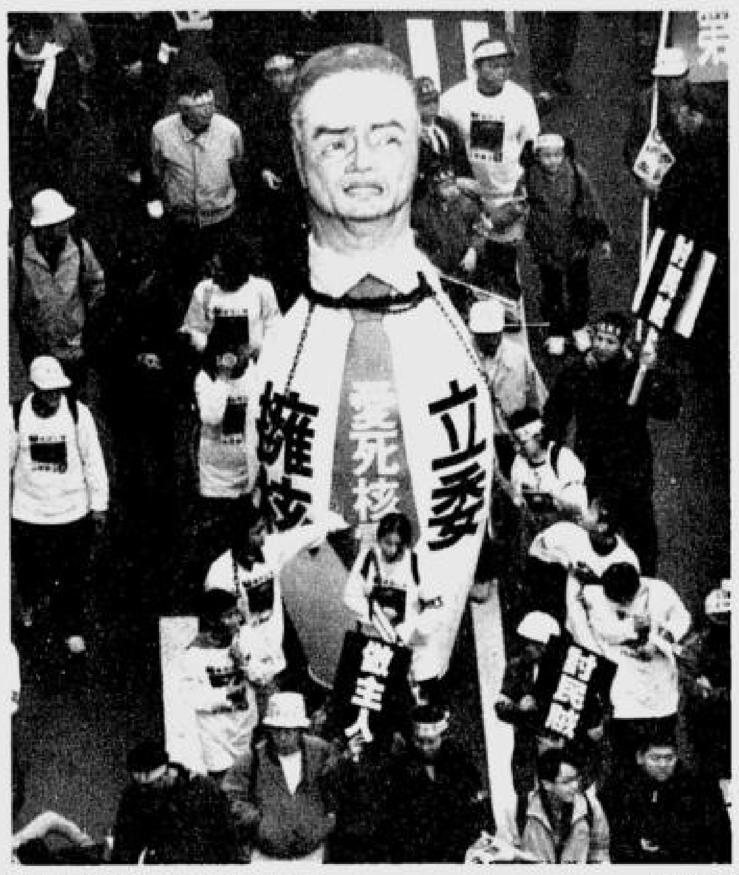

MOCKING THE PROS REUTERS

Taiwan anti-nuclear protesters march with a mock bowling pin to symbolize pro-nuclear legislators from the opposition parties in Taipei, Feb. 25. The march, by about 10,000 protesters, came 10 days after the government reversed its position and decided to resume construction of the $5.5-billion nuclear plant, the island's fourth.

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Milosevic spy chief arrested

BELGRADE—Serbia's new reformist government has launched its strongest attack yet on former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic's regime, arresting former Serbian secret police chief and Milosevic ally Rade Markovic.

Markovic, the highest-ranking official from the former regime to be arrested since Milosevic was overthrown in a popular revolt in October, is under investigation for "premeditated murder," Serbian Justice Minister Vladan Batic said late Saturday.

A leading parliamentarian suggested the arrest was just the beginning of a process, which would culminate in Milosevic himself being brought to justice.

"I guarantee that no longer will anyone in the country be able to break the law and live an untroubled life supported by the political authorities," said Cedomir Jovanovic of the ruling reformist Serb Democratic Opposition (DOS).

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague has indicted the former president and four of his top allies for war crimes allegedly committed in the Kosovo conflict in 1998-99.

So far, Yugoslav officials, especially Milosevic's reformist successor Vojislav Kostunica, have been extremely reluctant to hand over the wanted men, arguing that the Constitution forbids extradition of Yugoslav citizens.

But following increased international pressure, Belgrade has said it would change the law to allow for a transfer.

Batic refused to comment on the Milosevic situation but told reporters that Belgrade prosecutors had launched an inquiry into Markovic's potential connection with an October 1999 car crash which claimed the lives of four members of Vuk Draskovic's Serbian Renewal Movement. *AFP*

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Brazil's carnival heats up

RIO DE JANEIRO—Brazil's carnival was in full swing Saturday with its traditional high drama, dance, noise and visual entertainment flooding Rio de Janeiro streets where innumerable drummers and groups gave free rein to their emotions.

The carnival kicked off close to this top tourist spot's Cinelandia Square in the heart of Rio, where thousands followed the group "Cordao do Bola Preta" and its theme "To the new millennium, the joy continues," as it led the crowd to the deafening sound of drums.

More than 25,000 revelers danced through the city, slowly followed by a colossal lorry with amplifiers and a platform on top holding a band playing favorite sambas from recent years' carnivals.

The crowd went wild as hits from nearly a half century ago were played.

Visible among the youngsters dancing frenetically were leaders of the "Samba School" from years gone by. They will feature in the world-famous carnival parade, which begins Sunday.

In the afternoon, under a blazing sun, the most irreverent of the groups, the Banda de Ipanema, left the famous beach accompanied by multitudes of drag queens—men dressed as women—of all shapes, sizes and ages. *AFP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Group raises alarm on abuse of jailed women

ANGELES CITY—Torture, rape and other forms of sexual violence committed against women while in custody of law enforcement agents are now done in a "wider climate of impunity" because these are often hidden from public scrutiny and the prosecution and conviction rate against the abusers was low, the Amnesty International said.

The 40-year-old human rights organization also urged the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to "take urgent steps" in protecting nearly 3,000 women detainees in the Philippines.

The AI noted that the more than 30 incidents of rape and sexual abuses on women detainees by policemen, jail guards or military officials between 1995 and last year "represents only a fraction of the real number of cases."

"The lack of prosecutions for torture by state officials, including rape of female detainees, is a major factor contributing to a wider climate of impunity today," AI said.

The rape of women by state officials, according to AI, constitutes torture and, when convicted under Philippine laws, meant a punishment of death.

In a 28-page country report titled "Fear, shame and impunity: Rape, and sexual abuse of women in custody," AI believes that the "real number of cases is far higher than reported."

AI, after a five-year research, traced this to various reasons.

"Despite the existence in the Philippines of an active network of women's non-government organizations working on many issues including violence against women in the family and community, very few are currently in a position to monitor or document systematically torture of women in custody," AI said.

The underprivileged status of women makes them vulnerable to rape, sexual assault, threats, slaps, punches and kicks.

"Some Philippine human rights lawyers have noted that there is a degree of public acceptance that women in conflict with the law will be subjected to sexual harassment or other forms of ill treatment," the study said.

The AI also found that "suspected female offenders, often from the most marginalized groups including prostitutes, street children and drug users, are frequently regarded by society as inherently immoral and therefore unworthy of just and fair treatment."

On the part of the women, there is reluctance because of shame, stigma, fear of reprisals from abusive authorities, the lack of sensitivity from police and court officials and sensational treatment of stories by the media.

Although there were various laws and major international human rights treaties passed to protect women's rights, the AI said women's groups have reported poor implementation and inadequate funding for gender-based projects.

For instance, the implementation of the 1998 Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act, which requires the setting up of a rape crisis center in every province and city, had been stalled due to fund lack, AI noted.

The conditions in prisons for females, where facilities, medical and counseling services are lacking, and mostly men, not women staff, are on duty, make the detainees vulnerable to violations.

The AI also encouraged the government to reverse the trend during the Marcos and Aquino administrations where there have been "no successful prosecutions" for rape of women detainees that was "common" between 1965 and 1992.

The AI also expressed concern that the anti-vagrancy law was being used as a "pretext" for arbitrary arrest and detention. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila HI 32° Lo 23°	**Baguio** HI 24° Lo 15°	**Tuguegarao** HI 29° Lo 22°	**Laoag** HI 29° Lo 22°
Clark Zone HI 32° Lo 22°	**Tagaytay** HI 30° Lo 21°	**Legazpi** HI 33° Lo 23°	**Calapan** HI 32° Lo 22°
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Compiled by: Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

68th Annual National Convention

February 25 - March 1, 2001
Baguio City

reinventing the
FILIPINO
ARCHITECT
FOR THE EVER CHANGING MILIEU

CONVENTION THEME

The year 2000 has seen our country through some very trying times, economically, politically and environmentally. It has affected everyone all the way down to the grassroots level. We have seen many of our citizens, especially during the recent past, becoming polarized, taking that critical step in crossing lines away from centrist outlook and onto partisan politics. We have seen the daily decline of the peso and the havoc wreaked in our stock market from scandal after scandal, not to mention the occasional environmental and natural disasters that seem to be part of our country as a whole.

However, in the global scene, we have been witness to the many technological advances in telecommunications, marketing, medicine, engineering, and even the space program, among others. We are fortunate indeed to be present at a time like this when revolutionary breakthroughs in development at many diverse realms are everyday occurences and these are now accessible to us Filipinos in general and Filipino architects in particular.

The theme "REINVENTING THE FILIPINO ARCHITECT FOR THE EVER CHANGING MILIEU" imparts to us that given these two present though opposing milieus that we are in, providing the needed stimuli or perhaps inspiration to get us going on our way to recovery, improvement, advancement and ultimately leadership in our field of expertise; we may choose to reinvent ourselves and the way we practice architecture as an immediate applicable solution.

At the end of the day, we may come out of our convention and bring home with us a new formula or perhaps a new code of professional practice for a practical and entirely new order. Who knows? Be there when it happens. Do come to Baguio.

MALACAÑAN PALACE
Manila

Message

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Architects on your 68th Annual National Convention.

This undertaking is a great opportunity to improve the knowledge and foster the professional growth of its participants. It is likewise very much welcome for the cumulative learning that it will bring about for our country and people.

Your theme. "Reinventing the Filipino Architect for the Ever Changing Milieu" speaks of a timely rethinking of the thrusts of architecture in the country. While professionals like you have traditionally been an important contributor to national development, the advent of new technologies and practices warrants your continuing education and updating of skills to keep pace with emerging trends in the field.

It is my hope that you will be able to cultivate strong partnerships and be at the cutting edge in developing and adopting technologies for the creation of humane and environment-friendly communities and the provision of decent and livable homes for the less fortunate of our people.

Join me as we build not only homes for every Filipino but an edifice of peace, progress and economic stability for our nation.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila

Message

The Board of Architecture, Professional Regulation Commission wishes to congratulate the Officers and Members of the Philippine Institute of Architects (PIA) on the occasion of its 68th Annual National Convention on February 25 to March 1, 2001 at the Baguio Country Club, Baguio City.

Your theme: "Reinventing the Filipino Architect for the Ever Changing Milieu" adapts and augurs well for our fellow architect practitioners to meet the dynamic challenges in this new millennium for greater quality, magnitude and depth of professionalism, excellence, and global competitiveness.

Aware of your capabilities and potentialities to bring forth technical, moral and ethical standards of architectural practice through continuing professional development, the Board and the PRC are confident and proud that the Filipino Architects will gain international and world-class glory, recognition, and leadership.

We wish for your success in this convention and Mabuhay!

ARCH. EUGENE G. GAN, FUAP
Chairman
Board of Architecture

PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Message

Evolution is perhaps the one word that best describes the effect of change. It is also the process by which mankind had struggled through the centuries to survive and very often, given this superior intelligence and innate creativity over other beings, progressed from one civilization to another. Thus, in the field of Architecture, shelter was of a primeval necessity before other structures were built for his other activities that continued to grow in complexity and importance as he developed into the modern man that he is today. The architect, by whatever title he was then known, fulfilled his role in the community and later to society accordingly. It is in this light that the 68th PIA Annual Convention theme: "Reinventing The Architect In The Ever-Changing Milieu", came into being.

In this forthcoming convention, we look forward to your enthusiastic response in addressing the said convention theme, by being there in person. By your presence, we anticipate a more lively exchange of ideas; of a sharing of knowledge and experience that will contribute towards a more advanced state of competence in our profession, so critical in meeting the challenges of a fast changing global scenario.

Come to the 68th PIA Convention in Baguio on February 25th to March 1st, 2001. We want you to be an active participant in charting the course of our profession, to where it matters the most.

ARCH. AUGUSTO C. GALANG, FPIA
National President
Philippine Institute of Architects

PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Message

As architects, we welcome changes that enhance the structure. When we renovate an old house, we either tear the whole house apart or just parts of the house, start little by little, then eventually end up dismantling the whole house to complement the initial changes made. During all this time, the house is unaffected. But when we apply changes to our lives, we panic and resist especially during crises.

We should see crisis as an opportunity in disguise, a situation which can shatter our minds if we allow it to happen. However, during this crisis let us again strength to endure the crisis by seeing the opportunities being offered. When there are no houses to build, no plans to be prepared, no money allotted on new structures, let us seize this chance to explore the possibilities of offering consultancy and advisory services on construction efficiency and effectiveness, innovate and create from available and affordable sources, refocus our skills on maintaining and enhancing an already existing structure or redirect our efforts and talents on other arts and crafts requirements. This will not be easy but if we have to survive this crisis, we have to face this reality.

CRISIS is the best time to test our abilities for endurance for without it we will not be able to rebuild ourselves. Let us use our special gift, the skill, the experience and the willingness to try new things to conquer this crisis. So during our 68th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION allow ourselves to pause for a while, focus and move on with our lives and professions. I am sure that with you, your ideas, concerns and experiences, this event will be a realization of the positive side of "CRISIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY OF GROWTH AND WEALTH."

ARCH. ERNESTO ANTONINO D. NASOL, FPIA
Chancellor
College of Fellows

PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Message

As the Institute celebrates its sixty-eigth year of existence and continues to strive for excellence through the efforts of its members, we open the second year of the new millennium with a very special convention in the highest city in the Philippines. Welcome, one and all, to Baguio City!

This marks the very first time the Institute has opted to hold a convention in this part of the archipelago and entrusted to the Baguio group the task of playing host to this prestigious affair. The entire membership of the Baguio-Benguet section, together with our colleagues from North Luzon, is honored and privileged to host this very challenging undertaking.

Once again, the players of the construction industry take center stage as PIA members from all over the country congregate and, together, explore appropriate solutions to the difficulties of "Reinventing the Filipino Architect for the Ever Changing Milieu." A month ago, we were quite apprehensive about whether this convention would push through or not, given the political and economic turmoil our country was forced to face head on. However, due to the Filipino's patriotic resolve AND through Divine Intervention, we now face another new era in the annals of Philippine history. Truly, therefore, our theme is timely for the uncertain and trying times we are presently facing.

Despite the current economic conditions, which are definitely not at their brightest, we expect our very competent and qualified speakers—all experts in their fields of endeavor—to guide us toward more optimistic goals and boost our morale, while teaching us to be more effective and competitive. We certainly have to reinvent ourselves and look forward to the future in a new light, gearing ourselves toward a more active participation in global affairs, and opening our slightly limited world to changes in architecture and building construction in order to be part of the exciting innovations of the twenty first century.

Thank you for coming to Baguio City. We hope you will always cherish in your hearts the warm hospitality of its people inspite of the chilly air that only February in Baguio City can bring.

ARCH. BENEDICT P. LOY, FPIA
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CONVENTION PROGRAM

February 25, 2001

MORNING	AFTERNOON
Ingress Arrival of Delegates Registration Check-in at hotel	Registration Pictorial Opening of Product Exhibits Exhibits' Night

February 26, 2001 Convention Proper

MORNING	AFTERNOON
Eucharistic Celebration Registration Opening Ceremony Opening Presentation Keynote Address Plenary Session I	Concurrent Session A and B Visiting of Exhibits Sports and Games Architects' Fellowship Night

February 27, 2001

MORNING	AFTERNOON
Plenary Session II Plenary Session III	College of Fellows Meeting Annual Business Meeting Election of New Directors Viewing of Exhibits Free Night

February 28, 2001

MORNING	AFTERNOON
Plenary Session IV Plenary Session V Closing Ceremonies Recognition and Awards	City Tour Closing of Exhibits Recognition and Awards for Exhibits Investiture Ceremonies Honor Dinner

March 1, 2001

MORNING	AFTERNOON
Thanksgiving Mass Golf Tournament Sports and Games Baguio Tour Egress	Picnic Departure of Delegates

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Retired gov't worker latest winner of lotto

TACLOBAN CITY—For the second time in less than a month, a lotto outlet in the downtown area here has produced another multimillionaire. The two recent winners are both government retirees.

The Miralles Lotto outlet, or Lotto Terminal No. 08000021 along Rizal Avenue, sold the winning ticket for the Feb. 12 draw.

The jackpot prize was P14,900,409.60.

The winning number combination was 08, 15, 23, 35, 39, 42.

Zenaida Delantar, provincial district officer of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office here, told the INQUIRER she learned the winner is a retired sanitary officer from Naval, Biliran.

She said the recent winner was the sixth in Eastern Visayas since 1996 when lotto started its operations in the region.

Vicente Labro, PDI Visayas Bureau

Flower imports hurt Benguet

By Avigail Olarte
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The cutflower industry of Benguet, the country's top cutflower producer, is losing out to imported flowers flooding the local market, causing farmers here to press the government to tighten importation laws.

In a consultation meeting with Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor last week, Benguet farmers complained that they have been losing their market in Metro Manila, especially during peak seasons like All Saints' Day and Valentine's Day.

"They (businessmen) prefer imported flowers than our local produce," a farmer said.

Montemayor promised the farmers to personally press for a vigorous application of the Safeguards Measures Act (Republic Act 8800), which he coauthored, to protect the local market.

"When there is an excess in import volume, we would impose higher tariffs," Montemayor said.

He said he would order a more rigid quarantine test for imported flowers to ensure that these are disease-free.

Farmers in Benguet, who hold 70 percent of the cutflower market in Metro Manila, said they have been experiencing a drop in production due to the continuous use of old seedlings.

Andy Coltie, chair of the Highland Cutflower-Shalom, said their lands were not being maximized since old seedlings cannot meet the farmers' production target.

"We started with 1,500 dozens (every harvest season) per 1,000 sq. m. when new cutflower seedlings were given to us. Now, after two years, our produce has decreased to 800 dozens," he said.

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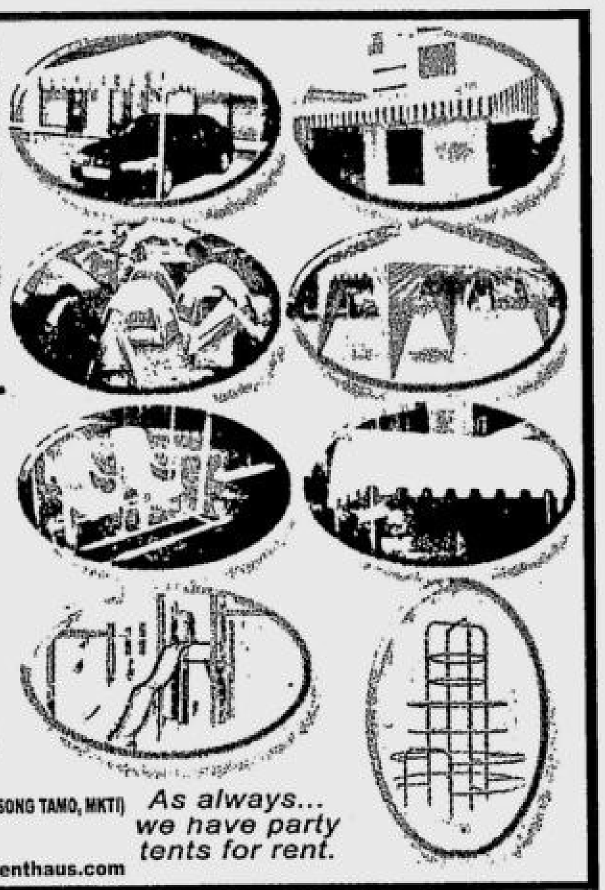

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Police eye robbery in ambush of 3 Japanese

CEBU CITY—Police are pursuing robbery as a possible motive for the ambush of three Japanese engineers last Thursday.

Senior Insp. Tomas Santander Jr., chief of the Pardo police which has jurisdiction over the case, said initial investigation showed that the intention of the attackers was not to kill the Japanese but to disable their vehicle, which the assailants failed to.

Santander said the plan of the assailants was apparently to stop the vehicle and probably to accost the Japanese and divest them of their valuables.

"If the intention was to kill, they (gunmen) could have sprayed immediately the vehicle with bullets," said Santander.

The Japanese engineers—Harutushi Usui, Hironobu Takeuchi and Yoshinobu Fukushima—were on their way home at past 8 p.m. Thursday when three armed men tried to stop them and fired at their blue Isuzu Highlander vehicle a few meters from their staff house at Phase I of St. Jude Acres Subdivision.

Survivors

The Japanese nationals were not hurt. Their driver, Felix Go, suffered minor cuts from the fragments of the broken windshield that was hit by bullets fired by the armed men.

Go's quick thinking saved all of them as he went on driving despite the hale of bullets. He then proceeded to the nearby Pardo police station to seek help.

The Japanese engineers work for Toa Construction, a Japanese firm that is undertaking the multimillion-peso South Coastal Road Project in Cebu City.

Santander said they entertained the theory that the ambush could be work-related but "the robbery angle weighs more" because the Japanese nationals have no known enemies at their office and in the community.

He said residents in the area had told police that the men who waylaid the Japanese were the same men seen earlier in the village.

Santander said the residents in the area suspected that the assailants may have heard rumors that the Japanese nationals were believed to be always carrying large sums of money.

Questions

Santander said the police were now trying to find the three Japanese to ask them if they really had a large sum of money with them on Thursday.

But Santander has been unable to talk to them as the three Japanese are reportedly in hiding for fear of their safety.

Santander said he and Supt. Ronald Roderos, Cebu City's police director, have assured Japanese Embassy officials of a speedy solution to the case.

He said Japanese officials led by Ito Eiji, the Japanese consul to Cebu, met with them on Friday to request that the police solve the case at the earliest possible time because a prolonged investigation could damage the image of Cebu in Japan as a peaceful city.

Cebu has long been a favorite vacation destination of Japanese tourists.

There are more than 300 Japanese nationals living in Cebu and some 100 Japanese firms operating here, most of which are located at the Mactan Export Processing Zone.

Santander said they also offered full security to the Japanese but the foreign nationals, through Eiji, declined the offer because they preferred to keep their whereabouts unknown.

Roger Paller, PDI Visayas Bureau

KIN DEMAND JUSTICE

Slain female PMAer gets hero's burial

STA. CRUZ, Ilocos Sur—"We want justice for Jessica," cried Efren Chavez before the casket of his daughter, 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez, during her burial at high noon Saturday here.

He repeatedly pounded the top of the coffin as his wife, Melwilda, went hysterical and nearly fainted.

Jessica, 22, was found dead on Feb. 9 inside her barracks at Fort Bonifacio in Makati City. She died from a bullet wound in the chest.

Police initially ruled her death as suicide but later findings by the National Bureau of Investigation showed that the gun was fired from a distance.

The elder Chavez said his daughter was found negative of powder burns, based on the findings of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the NBI.

The funeral of Chavez, the first Philippine Military Academy female graduate to die, was attended by about 3,000 sympathizers, including 12 of her *mistahs* from the PMA's Sanghaya Class of 2000.

"*Hindi kami interesado sa mga* benefits *na 'yan basta hustisya para kay* Jessica (We are not interested in her benefits. All we want is justice for Jessica)," cried Efren.

His daughter's *mistahs*, wearing their white dock uniform, helped bring Jessica's remains to her tomb at the San Jose cemetery here. They removed their black armbands and placed them on top of the coffin before it was interred.

Second Lt. Maria Victoria Ramon, Jessica's closest *mistah* who represented the Sanghaya class, assured the Chavez family that they would help in seeking justice for her death.

"Jessica's memories will always be in our hearts and minds," said Ramon.

Town officials, led by Vice Mayor Rodrigo Romano, and residents paid their last tribute to Jessica, the first PMA female graduate from Sta. Cruz. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

PHOTO COURTESY OF LACSON'S OFFICE

HAMMING IT UP
Former police chief Panfilo Lacson learns the tricks of the political trade the hard way on the campaign trail in Nueva Ecija with other candidates of the LDP.

Whirlwind strikes Davao Norte

DAVAO CITY—As if last week's flood was not enough, a strong whirlwind on Friday night struck in a village in Braulio Dujali town in Davao del Norte, leaving 59 people homeless.

Reports reaching the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) here said the whirlwind damaged at least 10 houses forcing residents of Sitio Bugtong to temporarily seek shelter in the town hall.

No one was reported hurt.

Carmelito Lupo, RDCC executive officer here, said those rendered homeless by the whirlwind were the same people who bore the brunt of a flood that hit the area on Monday last week.

The flood, which was triggered by three days of strong and continuous rains, submerged the homes of some 4,250 persons in Dujali town.

The floodwaters only subsided Thursday last week, leaving farms destroyed.

Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Silay City plagued by 2 mayors

BACOLOD CITY—There are now two mayors in Silay City, 14.4 kilometers northeast of this city.

Mayor Edwin Velez insisted that he is still mayor of Silay, not Vice Mayor Jose Locsin, because he has not received the 90-day suspension order from the Department of Interior and Local Government for an alleged election ban violation.

He added that he also asked the Court of Appeals to stop the DILG from implementing its suspension order against him.

Velez said they were just waiting for the CA's decision on their petition for an issuance of a temporary restraining order.

The petition was first filed on Jan. 19. But Velez said his lawyers decided to re-file the petition on Feb. 19 after learning that Locsin has taken over as acting mayor.

Still, Velez said he continues to report for work at the Silay City Hall.

Today, he added, he planned to retake the mayor's office from Locsin because he needs it to hold meetings with his constituents.

Locsin assumed as acting mayor while Councilor Ignacio Salmingo took over as acting vice mayor on Feb. 19 shortly after Rexdito Reyes, DILG director for Western Visayas, and Jose Mari Vargas, executive assistant of Gov. Rafael Coscolluela, served the suspension order against Velez.

Locsin issued an order of assumption to inform the city's department heads that he had taken over as acting mayor on orders of the DILG.

Velez was not around when the order was served. But Vargas earlier said the order was considered served because Reyes handed it over to Nenita Antiporda, a clerk assigned at the office of Velez.

Carla P. Gomez PDI Visayas Bureau

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‘Golden rice’ arrives in RP

(From page A1)

group has labeled it “fool’s gold.”

The first research samples of golden rice were brought to the Philippine-based International Rice Research Institute (Irri) in January from Switzerland, where the strain was invented.

“The arrival of these initial samples at Irri is a very significant step, allowing us to finally start on the required testing processes using local rice varieties,” said Ronald Cantrell, director of the institute tucked away on the foot of Mt. Makiling near the University of the Philippines campus in Los Baños.

Golden rice has attracted much attention because it contains building blocks for Vitamin A. Deficiency in the vitamin causes blindness and other diseases.

The grain got its name from the golden color of beta-carotene, the yellow-orange compound that gives carrots their color and the world’s most common source of Vitamin A.

The prospect of offering daily doses of this key nutrient to millions of Asians in their staple food has excited researchers and governments.

Ninety percent of the world’s rice is grown and consumed in Asia, the world’s most populous continent.

Scientists at the Irri, the world’s leading rice research center, will breed the golden rice samples, developed originally from the temperate japonica variety, into tropical indica varieties.

“This would be done through the conventional breeding method of crossing or via modern genetic modifications to enhance beta-carotene production,” said Irri plant biotechnologist Swapan Datta, a key researcher in the closely watched project.

Golden rice currently contains about 10 to 20 percent beta-carotene.

“We want to bring that level up to at least 20 to 40 percent” to suit Asian needs, Datta said.

“It will take us at least three years to send golden rice for field testing in Asia and another two years before they are available to farmers,” he said.

A special humanitarian board, made up of public and private sector groups, has been established to make golden rice freely available to those in need, according to officials.

German professors Ingo Potrykus and Peter Beyer, inventors of golden rice at Switzerland’s Federal Institute of Technology, head the special board.

After months of negotiations, the two inventors, along with Swiss agribusiness giant Syngenta AG which held the patent to golden rice, agreed to hand over the first grains to Irri for further development.

Once the research is completed, golden rice will be distributed free of charge to poor farmers in the developing world, Irri officials said.

Greenpeace

But environmental watchdog Greenpeace said the so-called GE industry was making false promises about golden rice.

According to the group, European markets have resoundingly rejected genetically engineered products, and global consumers do not want them in their food.

Greenpeace said figures provided by the developers of golden rice showed an adult would have to eat at least 12 times the average of 300 grams of rice daily to get the daily recommended amount of Vitamin A.

“It is clear from these calculations that the GE industry is making false promises about golden rice,” said Von Hernandez, a Manila-based Greenpeace campaign director for Southeast Asia.

He said golden rice did not address the underlying causes of Vitamin A deficiency, mainly poverty and lack of access to a diverse diet.

Greenpeace said pill supplements and food fortification were effective short-term measures to help address Vitamin A deficiency.

Red palm oil, naturally rich in Vitamin A, should be promoted for example, it said.

No quick fix

But Irri spokesman Duncan Macintosh said the institute did not consider golden rice a “quick fix or silver bullet” for Vitamin A deficiency in the developing world.

“But surely any new idea that could allow us to better deal with such difficult problems as vitamin deficiency among the poor deserves to be fully investigated,” he said.

Gordon Conway, the head of the US-based Rockefeller Foundation that provided funding for golden rice technology, said it was an excellent complement to fruits, vegetables and animal products.

“Complete balanced diets are the best solution. But poorer families, particularly their children, are less likely to receive a balanced diet and more likely to depend on cheap food staples such as rice,” he said.

AFP

Chavit again in thick of ‘jueteng’ controversy

(From page A1)

said Singson, who advises the Department of the Interior and Local Governments (DILG) on how to curb jueteng, met with gambling lords at a hotel in Eastern Metro Manila.

Among those who attended the meeting were jueteng operators from Batangas, Quezon, Rizal, Laguna, Northern Luzon and Central Luzon.

“The agenda of the Feb. 16 meeting is to appeal to jueteng lords to temporarily halt their operations for two months pending the legalization of the numbers game,” said Lacson, who is running for senator under the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

Lacson said he received reports that most of those who attended the meeting had agreed to stop their operations on condition that they be given the “franchise” for legalized jueteng in areas where they were operating.

“It raises a lot of suspicion why Singson, who has just been appointed DILG adviser on illegal gambling, will call for a meeting of jueteng operators and appeal to them to temporarily stop their operations,” Lacson said.

He noted that the meeting came at a time when Interior Secretary Joey Lina had announced a renewed campaign against all forms of illegal gambling.

“Did Secretary Lina give his explicit authorization to meet with these gambling lords? Or was Singson merely trying to regain his former role as jueteng bagman?” Lacson said.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Lina and Singson last night but could not reach them.

Singson testified at the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada that he collected more than P400 million in jueteng protection money for the then President over a period of 22 months until last year.

Lacson said he was not opposing efforts to legalize the highly popular illegal numbers game as thousand of poor Filipinos in the countryside depended on jueteng for their livelihood.

But he said Malacañang should carefully study the move to legalize jueteng to ensure that any income from its legalization would go to government’s coffers.

Lacson pointed out that Singson might not be the right person to oversee the legalization of jueteng since he was already tainted by his admission that he had acted as Estrada’s “bagman” in the jueteng payola scandal.

“It would be the height of irony if Singson will be given the task considering that he violated many laws, including the law on corrupting public officials, when he was collecting jueteng payola from gambling lords,” Lacson said.

The former PNP chief said President Macapagal-Arroyo should instead appoint a person of integrity to oversee efforts to legalize jueteng.

Earlier, it was reported that Efraim Genuino, president and CEO of the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), had set up a committee to study the legalization of jueteng.

The recent appointment of Chavit’s younger sister, Honeygirl Singson, as director of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), has something to do with the legalization of jueteng in the form of “small town lottery (STL)” similar to the setup during former President Corazon Aquino’s time, according to observers.

Under the PCSO charter, it can operate any numbers game without the franchise normally being given by Congress.

Last year, then President Estrada operated a legalized version of jueteng, the Bingo 2-Ball. It was set up by Charlie “Atong” Ang, a drinking and gambling buddy of Estrada.

But Estrada scrapped Bingo 2-Ball after a few weeks of operation following Singson’s jueteng exposé.

The falling out of Singson with Ang, who as Pagcor consultant did not allow him to get a franchise to operate Bingo 2-Ball in Ilocos Sur, prompted the governor to tell all against Estrada.

Cebuano tops 2nd board exam

(From page A1)

He was tingling with hope.

Arcenas, 26, a former male nurse and cum laude graduate of the Cebu Institute of Medicine (CIM), wanted to check out rumors that a list of the top 10 successful examinees was going to be posted—and that he was among the top 10.

Rey was not disappointed.

Not only was he on the list. He was No. 1 among the 750 who passed the second of this year’s two medical licensure exams.

Of the 1,352 who took the exams on Feb. 20, Rey bested graduates from the best medical schools in the country, with a grade of 86.5.

A combination of old-fashioned diligence and plain hard work had paid off. Rey had opted to study on his own for the exams rather than pay for expensive review classes.

“Nang-ambition man ko nga mo-top (It was my ambition to top the exams). But I also felt that I was not ready yet,” he told the INQUIRER.

This kind of honor is not new to Rey, who says he is driven by an intense desire to make his family and school proud of him.

Arcenas, who finished his undergraduate studies at the Velez College of Nursing, graduated magna cum laude and later placed fourth in the April 1994 nursing licensure examinations.

Friends and classmates said they would see him buried in his books at a study area at the college mezzanine until midnight, when it closed. Then Rey would head for a quiet nook in Velez hospital to continue his reading.

Co-workers at the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC), where he completed his post-graduate internship, portrayed Arcenas as a conscientious worker who was easy to get along with.

Others said they could see the advantages of his being a nurse from the way he established easy rapport with patients.

The son of retired teacher Aurora Du Francisco and Masbate School of Fisheries Vocational School administrator Eduardo Cañete Arcenas, Rey was born in Naro, Cawayan, Masbate.

He grew up in Cayabon, Milagros, in the same province, where he remembers spending afternoons with playmates fishing near a cliff.

He moved to Cebu for college and medical studies.

He is married to Ruth, a computer engineer with whom he has a 2-year-old son.

Asked what his family’s reaction was to his feat, he said: “My mother is here now and she’s very happy. My father is in India on a study grant although we called him up already. They are probably the two happiest people in the world.”

Asked about his plans, Rey said he wants to become a surgeon, a path that involves five years of training as a surgical resident.

He revealed that top hospitals in the country have already sent out feelers to him, but he has not yet applied for residency at any of them.

Greater feats—and more hard work—can come later. For now, Rey says he would rather curl up on the sofa of the small apartment he and his wife are renting, and lay back and enjoy this moment of success with the people he loves.

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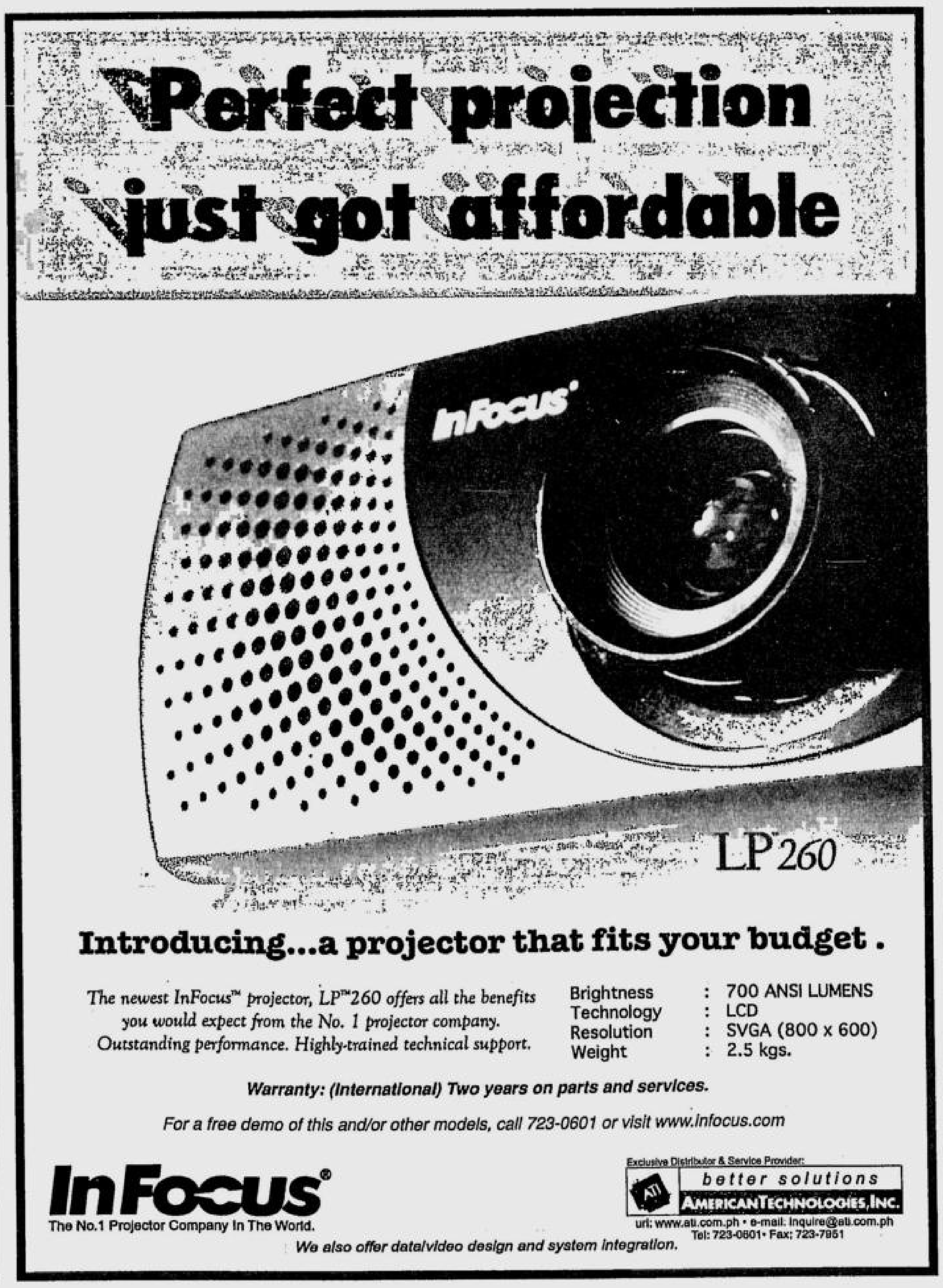

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GMA gov't 'child of people power'

(From page A1)

daylong anniversary rites of the military-backed revolt that forced out the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

In the afternoon speech at the Edsa Shrine, Ms Macapagal paid tribute to the hordes that had trooped to Edsa to demand Estrada's resignation.

"The unknown, the nameless and anonymous masses should get all the honor," she said.

But the President's speech almost turned into a campaign spiel when she rattled off the names of her 13 senatorial candidates and endorsed their platforms.

Indeed, an estimated 10,000 Filipinos who flocked to the historic Shrine to celebrate the anniversary, found that campaign paraphernalia of senatorial and party-list candidates dominated the scene.

Small crowd

Huge campaign streamers were hung at the Edsa-Ortigas flyovers while candidates' supporters waved flags. People distributed flyers and wallet-sized calendars with photographs of senatorial bets of the ruling People Power Coalition and of independent candidates in the May 14 elections.

Other candidates' supporters, on the other hand, wore campaign shirts while their bets elbowed their way onstage.

Police were surprised at the crowd's size, since they had expected around 50,000 people and had deployed around 400 policemen in the area.

"We were expecting a bigger crowd because People Power II had just happened and the spirit of freedom would be revived. But it seems that the people did not feel the (need to attend), as there is no common cause to fight for and no issue to embrace," Luga said.

But Ms Macapagal said she needed the public's help to turn around the economy and ensure good governance, adding, "the fight is not yet over."

No mention of Johnny

At the morning's flag-raising ceremony, Ms Macapagal urged Filipinos to draw inspiration from the two People Power uprisings.

She extolled former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, along with Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin for leading the peaceful revolt in 1986.

But in citing the leaders of that revolt, Ms Macapagal markedly left out Sen. Juan Ponce-Enrile who is now a member of the political opposition.

The three presidents jointly released yellow balloons carrying a streamer that read "Cry of the nation—change and justice." Ms Macapagal lit a "freedom flame" and turned the torch over to the youth in gratitude for their participation in Edsa II.

Later, she sang nationalist songs, danced jubilantly on stage, and delivered another speech before a crowd much smaller than the one that had gathered there from Jan. 16-20.

Ms Macapagal called the uprising against former President Joseph Estrada "a spontaneous combustion . . . a mystery from God."

Sin, in an afternoon homily at the Edsa Shrine in Mandaluyong, urged Filipinos to avoid a lifestyle of "midnight drinking, gambling and womanizing and partying" associated with Estrada.

New weapon

"At Edsa I and Edsa II we won because our cause gave us the moral advantage. Everyone therefore, every Filipino, must apply the enduring lessons of People Power I and sustain the momentum of People Power II," Ms Macapagal said.

In 1986, Filipinos gave the world a new "weapon," the President said.

"We surprised the world by winning over a dictatorship with flower in the barrel of a gun," she said. "At Edsa, we gave the world a new weapon—people power."

In her morning speech, she noted that good governance was also the responsibility of the "fathers" of People Power.

"Good governance, as experience has taught us, especially in the last two and a half years, is not an exclusive duty of government but must include all sectors," she said.

She reminded her audience that the second bloodless revolution has given Filipinos a "new lease in reclaiming our nation's destiny through a new opportunity at governance."

Cory seeks support

Cory Aquino also sought the public's continuing support in protecting the gains of democracy.

Asked to comment on the formation of a multi-sectoral "People Power III" movement to pressure the Supreme Court to act on plunder cases against ousted President Joseph Estrada, Aquino asked people to wait for and respect the verdict of the high tribunal.

"It's important for all of us to confine our energy to building our nation and helping President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," she said.

But activists and other demonstrators put a damper on Sunday's festive mood when they marched to denounce the delay in the prosecution of Estrada. ***(See related story on this page.)***

Healing wounds

Ms Macapagal, who was catapulted to power last month when hundreds of thousands of people massed on Edsa to demand that Estrada resign, urged Filipinos to use the goodwill generated by the uprisings to "heal the wounds of division," citing Moro and communist insurgencies.

Questions about Macapagal's presidency have dampened the momentum of her rise to power on Jan. 20, and hampered the start of an expected economic recovery.

The peso and stock markets have reacted negatively to a legal challenge from Estrada, who claims Ms Macapagal usurped power through "mob rule." The Supreme Court is expected to rule soon on the constitutional issues that have been raised.

The President inherited from the Estrada administration an economy in disarray, a huge budget deficit, widespread corruption and a military beset by infighting.

Sin in "holy place"

In an afternoon Mass at the Edsa Shrine, Cardinal Sin called on all Filipinos to "tell our children and our children's children of the faith and heroism of the Filipino people in this holy place."

"All generations of Filipinos must know the greatness and holiness of this sacred ground," Sin said of the shrine, which he has declared "holy ground" where Catholic pilgrims can supposedly avail of plenary indulgences.

Sin said Edsa had become holy ground because of the people's sacrifice for the welfare of the country.

"When you came here in 1986 and again in Jan. 17 to 20 this year, you carried with you not guns or money," he said. "You carried with you food to share, love to share, presence to share, conviction to share, selves to share."

"Your are the pride of this nation," he said. "You are the people who make this ground holy."

Not a place on map

Sin encouraged the Catholic faithful to make pilgrimages to the Edsa Shrine, saying the Holy See has granted his petition to grant pledges of plenary indulgence to all who make such a pilgrimage.

But Sin noted that holy ground was not limited to a place on the map.

"Each time we choose morality over sin, each time we choose faithfulness rather than mediocrity, we stand on holy ground," Sin said. "Holy ground is the ground of honesty, humility, justice, forgiveness, prayers and service for the poor."

Sin said to sacrifice was to abandon an "easy-go-lucky way of life," in obvious reference to the lifestyle of Estrada, which the Cardinal has scathingly attacked in the past.

"Having money without hard work is the opposite of sacrifice," he said.

"Let us earn our food by the sweat of our brow, not from games of chance or from illegal means," he added, apparently taking a dig at "jueteng," the illegal numbers game that helped lead to Estrada's downfall. ***With reports from Agnes E. Donato; AP, AFP***

Unusual 'salubungan' graces Edsa II

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA
AND VOLT CONTRERAS

BESIDES the clergy and the religious, militant organizations provided most of the warm bodies at the Edsa Shrine yesterday afternoon, emphasizing their message that former President Joseph Estrada should not escape justice like the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"People Power I and People Power II taught us lessons, we cannot afford to have another Marcos eloping from the people's verdict and demand for justice," said Satur Ocampo of the Bayan Muna party-list group.

Other militant groups like Courage, Alliance of Concerned Teachers, Migrante, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Akbayan joined the celebration.

Akbayan unfurled a huge banner on the Ortigas Flyover that said "Goodbye *Trapos* (traditional politicians)."

While most of those who came reminisced about the historic events last month, other participants, like former President Fidel Ramos, reenacted the events of February 1986, such as the "*salubungan*," when Ramos' military group came out of Camp Aguinaldo to join millions of civilians on Edsa.

But yesterday, former President Corazon Aquino's brother Butz Aquino, who represented civilians in past *salubungans*, was a no-show when the event was reenacted around 1:30 p.m. at the People Power Monument in White Plains.

Aquino sided with former President Estrada during People Power II.

Ramos marched to the Edsa Shrine anyway, together with Vice President Teofisto Guingona, military chief Gen. Angelo Reyes, PNP Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, and other top police and military officials.

As they marched south on the northbound lane of Edsa, Bayan and its allied militant organizations marched on the opposite lane of Edsa.

An alternative—and unusual—*salubungan* took place at the corner of Ortigas and Edsa as the leftist groups, with Teddy Casiño and Ocampo in the lead, merged with the Ramos contingents.

They then walked to the shrine, together.

For its part, left-wing alliance Sanlakas, active in the anti-Estrada movement yet cynical toward the Macapagal presidency, said Filipinos would rather prepare for another popular revolt—an "Edsa III"—because "Edsa I and II failed us."

Sanlakas members held their own program at the People Power Monument, a few hundred meters from where the Macapagal administration marked the event with speech, song and prayer at the Our Lady of Edsa Shrine.

Davide says SC . . .

(From page A1)

Ombudsman.

Davide and Justice Artemio Panganiban have inhibited themselves from the court proceedings upon the request of former Sen. Rene Saguisag, one of Estrada's lawyers.

Davide swore in Ms Macapagal at noon of Jan. 20 as Estrada was preparing to leave Malacañang at the height of Edsa People Power II.

Davide, however, earlier said he disagreed with Saguisag's contention that he and Panganiban had "prejudged the case" as they had both stated publicly that Ms Macapagal's takeover was legal.

During the forum, the Chief Justice sidestepped questions regarding the role he played on the peaceful transition from the Estrada to the Macapagal presidency.

He instead called on members of civil society not to let down their guard in protecting the gains of People Power II.

Davide also urged public officials "to ingrain in their hearts and souls the dictum that public office is a public trust."

During the open forum, Davide revealed that his "secret" for his attentiveness during the Senate impeachment trial was guidance from the Holy Spirit and his love for his work.

"Love your work . . . then you won't feel sleepy," Davide said in Cebuano. "I was (also) guided all the time by the Holy Spirit."

Davide also received on Saturday the medallion of the Order of Rajah Humabon Award from Cebu City during its 64th anniversary of its charter.

Davide is only the second person to receive the highest award given to a person by the Cebu City government every charter anniversary celebration on Feb. 24.

The first recipient was Dr. A.J. Van Dulst, mayor of Harlemeermer, a city in The Netherlands that established sister-city relationship with Cebu City.

Cebu City Mayor Alvin Garcia said the city was honoring Davide for his "uncompromising sense of justice," especially during the impeachment trial.

Rajah Humabon was the ruler of Cebu during the pre-Spanish era. Although he welcomed Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan and converted himself and his wife to Christianity, he contributed to the victory of Lapulapu, the chieftain of the nearby Mactan Island.

Citing the book, "Glimpses in History of Early Cebu" by Lina Quimat, Davide said Humabon sent his warriors "ostensibly to aid of Magellan but in reality to infiltrate his ranks and strike from within."

Reyes' future hinges on probe of scams

(From page A1)

Adm. Guillermo Wong after the Navy Flag Officer openly questioned the anomalies in the Marine corps.

Reyes, however, said earlier that he was not applying for the position of defense secretary.

Rather than prosecute Marine officers involved in irregularities, Reyes demoted Wong. Reyes offered Wong the Northern Command, the newly created Luzon-wide command of the Armed Forces.

Wong refused the demotion because it would take him out of the Navy just to placate the Marines. He said he would resign effective March 1 or nine months before his scheduled retirement in December.

But Reyes was able to convince Wong to simply relinquish the Navy command on March 1 instead of resigning from the service.

Wong said he agreed to be on "floating status" until his retirement in December.

Another officer, who also asked not to be named, provided details of at least two irregularities in the Marines, which have yet to be acted upon by higher headquarters.

These involved inferior Kevlar helmets worth P3.8 million and 72 missing late-model assault rifles costing P7.2 million.

Military documents showed that in late 1998, during the term of then Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa, the Marine corps purchased US-made Kevlar helmets worth P3,865,310.

Incidentally, Espinosa, commandant of the AFP Joint Command and Staff College in Camp Aguinaldo, is one of the four lieutenant generals being considered for the top AFP post to be vacated by Reyes.

The helmets were bought without public bidding, according to documents. The procurement was divided into 14 orders involving seven suppliers in an attempt to circumvent the requirement that Camp Aquinaldo approve it.

Fly-by-night

Subsequent investigation revealed that only two of the suppliers—Atria and Presel Trading—were legitimate companies. The rest were "fly-by-night" companies.

Documents also showed that only 299 Kevlar helmets were delivered. Worse, what the Marine corps received were not US-made helmets but inferior Taiwanese-made Kevlar helmets whose specifications did not fit battle conditions.

The procurement was for 799 helmets but only 299 pieces were delivered.

The purchase of 72 Heckler and Koch MP5 (HK-MP5) assault rifles for P7.2 million is even worse.

Documents showed that in early 2000, during the term of then Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Percival Subala, the Marine corps purchased the rifles.

These were to be used in Mindanao. Marines who may be deployed for counter-terrorism missions in Metro Manila were also to be issued the rifles.

The Philippine National Police's Firearms and Explosives Division (FED) approved the purchase of the rifles from Trimark Ventures.

On June 21, 2000 while Maj. Gen. Librado Ladia was the Marine commandant, the firearms were released to the Marines from the vaults of the PNP-FED where the guns were deposited for documentation by Trimark Ventures.

A week later, the Marines wrote the PNP-FED that the purchase of the rifles was "not consummated due to budgetary constraints." But in fact the weapons had been paid for and delivered to the Marines, according to documents.

Weeks later, police authorities raided the Plaza Resort in Subic where they arrested suspected Taiwanese gunrunners. Among the firearms seized from the foreigners were five of the HK-MP5 assault rifles the Marines had ordered.

Missing rifles

The 72 rifles cannot be accounted for in the Marine armory. These have disappeared, according to military documents.

Ladia was present on Feb. 15 at the Marine headquarters when Wong called on the Marines to stop anomalous practices and to institute reforms in their procurement system.

"The ball is now on Reyes," said the officer, who provided details of the two questionable transactions.

"We'll have to see how Reyes will address these concerns. Failure on his part will be a dark blot on his record and may affect his chances of being named DND (Department of National Defense) chief," the officer said.

In a press briefing on Friday, Reyes said he had directed the AFP Inspector General to immediately look into these cases.

Reyes promised that appropriate action would be taken "soonest."

Pressed when to expect results, Reyes said "soonest is soonest."

Reyes' term was extended to 2002 by Joseph Estrada to secure his loyalty. The extension was not honored by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Macapagal . . .

(From page A1)

Estrada forces.

Not worried

"I welcome any court-martial proceedings," said Reyes at the Edsa People Power Monument yesterday morning. "I'm not worried."

Ebdane said he was leaving it up to concerned officials to conduct an investigation.

"What's important is that we did the right thing. What we did was within the bounds of the Constitution as far as our group was concerned," he said.

He said that what they did was to prevent bloodshed.

"It was for the purpose of safeguarding the lives of the personalities in the line of succession. What's wrong about that," he said.

Ebdane said Saguisag's group could be unhappy about the people not siding with them.

"You know, sometimes, you have to sacrifice everything. Your family, yourself . . . if what you think what you're doing is right. So be it," he told reporters at the Edsa I celebrations.

De Villa said he doubted that an investigation or case against the President would prosper.

Besides, he said he did not receive Saguisag's letter.

"I have not received anything except what I have read in the newspapers. That is not a basis for action. Insofar as the issue is concerned, they must file the charges, I suppose," he said.

In Davao City, the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said Saguisag was giving the military and Ms Macapagal "too much credit than they deserve" when he accused them of plotting against Estrada.

Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general, said Saguisag ignored the fact that it was the mass of people who really "plotted" and ousted Estrada from power, not the military.

"Saguisag's comments are in sharp contrast with the message of People Power I and II. The people, the faceless masses, effected changes and ousted a dictator and a corrupt President, not the military," Luque said. ***With reports from Nagiel B. Bañacia, PDI Visayas Bureau and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gov't on lookout for mad cow disease

(From page A1)

sisted the two shipments that entered the country were safe, while it has refused to accept the third shipment of 24.8 tons from its Irish exporter.

The Department of Health is investigating the two beef shipments which were reportedly released to Monterey despite the ban, while the Bureau of Customs in Cebu City said Monterey failed to present certification that the third shipment was free of mad cow disease.

Before the ban was imposed, the Philippines imported during a two-year period 34.6 million kilos of beef from at least 10 European countries, including Britain where "mad cow" disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE, was first identified in 1985.

Despite the assurances, however, the Bureau of Food and Drugs and the National Meat Inspection Commission admitted the government did not have the means to detect the presence of BSE in beef and meat products.

The World Health Organization regional office in Manila also said it was "impossible to determine the true number of people with variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (mad cow's incurable human form) because systematic surveillance is carried out in only a limited number of developed countries."

"Thus, the future potential public health threat of variant CJD is alarming and currently unquantifiable," said a WHO document furnished the INQUIRER.

Perhaps

Is it possible that some BSE-tainted meat had entered the country before the ban was imposed? "Maybe yes, maybe no," said a top official of the Department of Agriculture.

Has mad cow made its way into the local food chain? According to the DA official who asked not to be named, "We have no way of knowing. We hope BSE will be restricted to Europe," where the disease has already killed 180,000 head of cattle and was blamed for the deaths of more than 80 people.

NMIC executive director Efren Nuestro said: "The technology for checking for the presence of (BSE) in processed meat and other imported meat products is not yet available here."

Because of this, the Philippine government has to rely on the tests conducted by the beef exporting countries, said BFAD head William Torres.

Nuestro said the NMIC was "worried, like other concerned government agencies. At this point, we're on the lookout for beef imports from Europe, particularly those countries covered by the ban," he said.

"This is no time for complacency about the dangers of mad cow," Nuestro told the INQUIRER.

Stressing the need to prevent the entry of BSE, then Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara issued last November Memorandum Order 19, ordering a "temporary ban on the importation of live cattle, sheep and goats, their meat and meat products, bovine embryo, meat and bone meal and other feed ingredients from (13) European countries."

Covered by the ban were the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), Ireland, Belgium, Denmark, France, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Germany.

Between January 1999 and November 2000, the Philippines imported beef and beef products from the following European countries: Belgium, 149,571 kilograms; Denmark, 3.34 million kg; France, 2.42 million kg; Germany, 7.9 million kg; Holland, 6.38 million kg; Ireland, 12.5 million kg; Italy, 1.39 million kg; Spain, 280,443 kg; Sweden, 41 kg, and Switzerland, 85,270 kg.

In 1999, the country imported a total of 39.7 million kilos of beef. Last year, this increased to 43.9 million kilos.

Other sources of local beef imports are Argentina, 1.14 million kg; Australia, 35.7 million kg; Brazil, 1.6 million kg; Canada, 466,945 kg; China, 219,704 kg; Hong Kong, 24,240 kg; India, 47,414 kg; Japan, 150 kg; South Korea, 21,000 kg; Malaysia, 100 kg; New Zealand, 7.08 million kg; Singapore, 540,677 kg, and United States, 2.63 million kg.

Alarm bells

The DA directive, which set off alarm bells, also called for the immediate suspension of the processing and issuance of veterinary quarantine clearances and import permits, as well as the confiscation of all shipments from countries at risk.

In 1996, the country imposed a similar ban on beef imports from the UK. "The government lifted the ban only in January 2000. I think it will be longer this time," said Abila of the NVQS, another DA-attached agency.

Like Nuestro, Abila said that thorough testing was the country's best defense against BSE. "In the absence of testing, strict surveillance and monitoring systems will be our first lines of defense," he said.

"We must bear in mind that BSE started in Britain and eventually spread to the European continent. This means something went wrong with the measures they adopted to handle the problem," he added.

The recent resurgence of the disease in Europe came despite widespread beef import restrictions and other measures intended to protect the food supply.

During the past three months, the NVQS has seized at least three shipments of European meat products "which could have been contaminated with mad cow disease," said Abila.

These included 10 containers of meat and bone meal from Ireland, four containers of frozen beef from Germany and two containers from Holland.

"We have communicated with the respective European governments about our desire to re-export them to their countries of origin. But the exporters do not want to take them back. That's the problem," according to Abila.

Last Dec. 22, the Bureau of Animal Industry had ordered the re-exportation of all beef imports which originated from the 13 countries listed in the DA directive of Nov. 14.

Placed on hold

In General Santos City, NMIC inspectors swooped down on several stores selling canned corned beef brands like Bon Apetit, Plum Rose and Target, all imported from France. "They have been placed on hold by the NMIC prior to their disposal," according to Nuestro.

He ordered the NMIC office in South Cotabato to "make sure necessary precautions are taken to prevent stray animals and even humans from scavenging for the condemned products" when they are disposed of.

Aside from blocking beef shipments, the government has forbidden the use of animal feeds derived from meat products, another transmitter of mad cow disease.

The problem of contaminated beef is worst in Europe.

The European Union, under fire for its failure to eradicate BSE, has slaughtered nearly 500,000 cows in Germany. The EU estimates the cost of incinerating slaughtered animals at $3.3 billion.

The EU also required all cattle over 30 months old to be tested for the disease. It set aside about $1 billion for the tests, which cost about $100 per animal.

Britain has spent $6 billion on efforts to eradicate BSE, including the killing of more than four million head of cattle. Such a blow could devastate the economies of Third World countries like the Philippines, despite our small cattle population of only 2.5 million head.

Early this month, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization warned that cattle in more than 100 countries may have been exposed to BSE.

In the United States, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the Department of Agriculture is also enforcing import restrictions and conducting surveillance for BSE.

Degenerative

So what is BSE?

Mad cow is a chronic degenerative disease that attacks the central nervous system of cattle, destroying brain tissue and eventually causing dementia and death, according to the WHO.

There is no known cure for BSE, said the WHO.

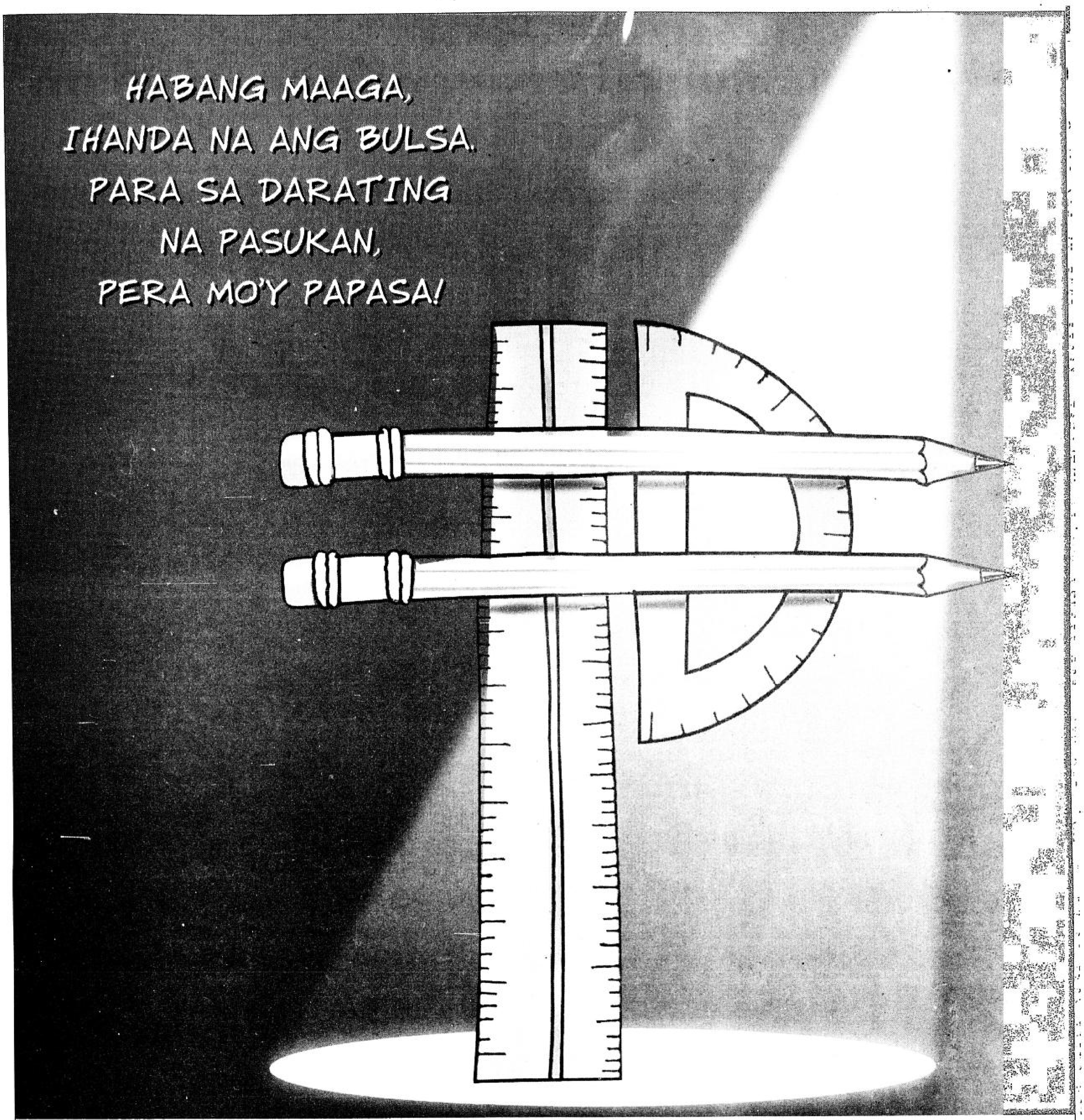
Scientists believe mad cow spread among cattle primarily through "animal recycling"—the use of bone meal and other ground animal parts in commercial feeds. The malformed protein that causes the disease, called a prion, is not easily killed by cooking or freezing and can survive for an indefinite period outside the body.

BSE's human variant is probably contracted from eating infected meat products. The disease is carried in nervous system tissues, not muscles, and is most likely to be found in products like sausages.

"Humans who develop this disease will slowly lose the ability to think and will suffer from memory loss and progressive brain damage until they can no longer see, speak or feed themselves. Their ability to move properly is also progressively damaged. The disease has been aptly referred to as Alzheimer's on fast forward," said the WHO report.

According to the WHO, "the future trend of variant CJD is uncertain. As the most likely sources of infection are cattle tissues entering the food chain, a large number of people may have been exposed to the risk before appropriate measures could be taken.

"Moreover, modern food processing techniques and international trade facilitate the spread of this unusual disease," the WHO said.



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Giv Soap bolsters lineup

By Dennis U. Eroa

FROM Blu Sun Power to Giv Soap Masters.

The change for this three-year team isn't just on its corporate name, though. In a no-nonsense bid to finally snap its title drought, Giv has signed up ex-pro Joseph "Ogie" Gumatay and Letran standout John Paul Prior, a move designed to shore up its inconsistent backcourt.

Gumatay, a former UP stalwart, had a forgettable one-year stint with Red Bull in the PBA. He was a member of the 1998 Dr. J Rubbing Alcohol team which won the Centennial Cup crown.

Prior played briefly for Red Bull while it was with the PBL but he was unable to hook up longer because of his size. Prior stands 5-foot-7 but makes up with his cunning plays.

Giv hasn't entered the finals of the PBL. Coach Nat Canson blamed the lack of reliable pointguards for Giv's fourth place finish in the just-concluded Challenge Cup won by Shark Energy Drink.

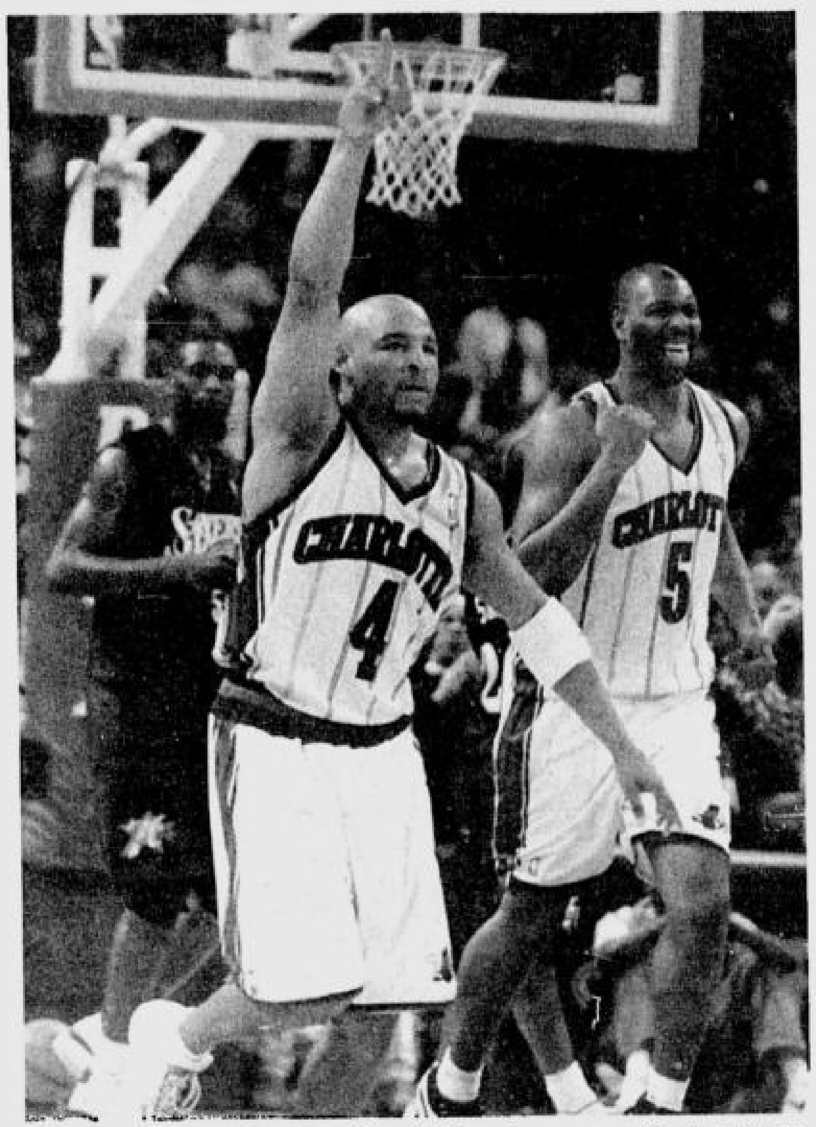
The presence of Gumatay and Prior will stabilize Giv's backcourt and will leave the prolific Egay Billones in his favorite offguard position come the Chairman's Cup tentatively set on March 24 at the Makati Coliseum.

Team owner and PBL chair Dioceldo Sy also told the INQUIRER that a he's trying to work out a deal to exchange swingman Edwin Bacani to Montaña slotman Gilbert Lao. Lao, 6-foot-5, was the PBL Press Corps choice as Most Improved Player in the Chairman's Cup.

Adding to Giv's firepower is the presence of Tristan Codamon, who will see action in the coming conference.

Hornets halt Sixers' 6-game run

Wesley's triple keys 86-85 victory



WESLEY (4) celebrates after hitting the game-winning triple. Teammate Elden Campbell (5) also rejoices while Mutombo looks on. AP

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—David Wesley hit a 3-pointer with 5.9 seconds to play to lift the Charlotte Hornets to an 86-85 victory over Philadelphia, snapping the 76ers' six-game winning streak.

Saturday night's game was the second straight game Wesley has made a winning last-minute 3. He lifted Charlotte to a 93-91 victory over Golden State on Thursday night with a 3-pointer with 17 seconds left.

Eddie Robinson led Charlotte with 15 points. Baron Davis finished with 14 points and 10 assists, Wesley had 13 points and Jamal Mashburn and Elden Campbell each scored 12.

Allen Iverson scored 47 points for Philadelphia, passing the 40-point mark for the 14th time this season and for the sixth time in his last 11 games.

Dikembe Mutombo, acquired Thursday in a trade with the Atlanta Hawks, had seven points and nine rebounds in 35 minutes for the Sixers.

Raptors 106, Wizards 99

In Washington, Vince Carter, one night after playing 63 minutes in a triple-overtime loss to Sacramento, scored 19 points as Toronto snapped a two-game losing streak.

Keon Clark finished with 17 points and Antonio Davis added 16 for the Raptors.

Richard Hamilton led Washington with 23 points. Christian Laettner, acquired Thursday from Dallas in an eight-player trade that sent Juwan Howard to the Mavericks, had 18 points and five rebounds in his debut with the Wizards.

Mitch Richmond scored 16 points and rookie Courtney Alexander, also acquired in the Dallas trade, added 13 as the Wizards lost their third in a row.

Spurs 107, Mavericks 104

In Dallas, Tim Duncan had 31 points and 13 rebounds, his NBA-best 44th double-double of the season, as San Antonio rallied for the win after squandering a 15-point lead.

Duncan scored six of his points over the last 1:23, including 4-of-5 free throws. He has 198 double-doubles in his 261 career regular-season games.

Derek Anderson had 24 points for the Spurs, and Antonio Daniels had 17. David Robinson finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Steve Nash has 29 points and 10 assists for the Mavericks.

Meanwhile, an agent is using a politician to get 2.29-meter (7-foot-6) Chinese center Yao Ming to the NBA.

Former Arizona Rep. Matt Salmon, representing agent Bill Duffy, is going to China on a mission to persuade officials there to allow Yao to enter the NBA draft.

Complete rersults:

Toronto 106, Washington 99; Miami 75, New Jersey 70; Charlotte 86, Philadelphia 85; Chicago 90, Vancouver 75; San Antonio 107, Dallas 104; Denver 85, Atlanta 82; L.A. Clippers 123, Portland 120, 2OT. **AP**

Vijay wins; Frankie falters

SINGAPORE—Vijay Singh scored back to back tournament wins for the second time in his career when he captured the title in the $850,000 Singapore Masters here Sunday.

Wins in the Malaysian Open and here have been especially sweet for the Fijian, who now moves to the USPGA Tour to prepare for his title defense in the US Masters in five weeks time.

Singh's previous consecutive wins came back in 1988 in Africa, though the champion could not recall the tournaments he played then.

The Fijian star of Indian descent, whose first name means "victory" in Hindi, wrested the lead from the Philippines' Frankie Minoza after a rain-drenched match on Saturday at the Singapore Island Country Club's Bukit Course and never looked back.

Singh claimed the $141,660 top prize with a score of 21 under par 263, two shots ahead of Warren Bennett of England, who managed to jump into sole possession of the second spot with an eagle three on the par five 18th.

Dutchman Maarten Lafeber shared third spot with Scotsman Colin Montgomerie, both finishing on 18 under par 266.

First round leader Padraig Harrington of Ireland and Anders Hansen of Denmark were joint fifth at 17 under par, while the Philippines' Miñoza and Mikael Lundberg of Sweden came in joint seventh.

Miñoza, the halfway mark leader, fumbled with a 72 to wind up tied for seventh with Swede Mikael Lundberg at 268. Another Filipino, Gerald Rosales, shot a 70 to finish tied for 17th at 273. ***AFP***

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Sevilla rules derby

ENGINEER Jun Sevilla of Malvar, Batangas, a regular fixture in the NCA and Ucap derbies, hit a goldmine in the Hulsey Whitehackle cross-breeds recently.

Sevillas's JRS Spectrum Pasay 4-Cock May 25 ruled the "BL BG Showdown 6-Cock Derby" at the Mandaluyong Coliseum, extending his long winning streak.

Sevillas's remarkable record of eight derby championships began in the P8.8-million Hatawan 7-Cock Derby of Roligon last July where he emerged as one of five champions among 459 participants.

He then conquered the Pasay City Cockpit Anniversary 5-Cock Derby, which is considered as a major national derby since the participants come from practically all big cockpits.

JRS Spectrum racked up winnings in several 3-cock and 4-cock events, according to Sevilla.

"I am concentrating mainly on the Hulsey Whitehackle breed because this is the one that really clicked . It came from Kent Short of Tenessee, USA and Joe Fuentes of Okahoma," Sevilla added.

NCA tilt on today

THE COUNTRY'S best fighting cocks will be featured anew in the NCA (National Cockers Association)7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum today and Wednesday.

Kicking off the star-studded affair is the three-cock elimination round. This will be followed by the all-important four-cock finals on Wed., Feb. 28. Hosted by Gerry Fevidal, Ruel Ricaford and Alex Escalona, the derby will pit past NCA seven-cock champions Jessie Viceo (San Rafael), the Alan Tan-Patrick Puno tandem (Capitan III), Big Dome owner Nene Araneta (Thunderbird-Firefly IV), Gerry Fevidal (Geran), Ruel Ricaford and E. Santos (RT-114 Geran Mapalad) and Pampanga's Eric Yu (New Guagua Coliseum).

Meanwhile, another NCA 7-Cock Derby will be held on March 12-14, with Meycauayan Mayor Eddie Alarilla and engineer Romy Panganiban as hosts.

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en

SIODINA (middle) raises his trophy with a little help from Jay Sobrepeña of College Assurance Plan as Peng de Tagle (right), chief operating officer of MRT, looks on.

Siodina learns lesson from CAP Challenge

HAD his playing plans pushed through, Mario Siodina should have been playing the US Seniors PGA Tour now. Up until visa problems got in the way, he was all set to join the qualifying event in Texas.

The cancellation of his US trip last November may just turn out to be a blessing in disguise as the College Assurance Plan Seniors Challenge suddenly came up, offering a chance for further improvement.

His recent victory in the Camp John Hay leg of the CAP Challenge is an indication of his resolve to catch up with the high level of play in the circuit of the world's best-and-over players.

As if getting even with first leg winner Roger Antonio was not enough, the veteran World Cupper even finished 16th overall in the regular pro tour event.

The first mission was accomplished when Siodina shot 67-71 to beat Antonio's 72-69 by three strokes. And when name players like Robert Pactolerin, Cesar Ababa and Dan Cruz missed the cut, Siodina easily did and his closing 66-72 earned him a windfall of almost P32,000.

Richard Sinfuego, meanwhile, became the second first-time winner of the new professional tour presented by CAP, MRT, Fil-Estate Group of Companies and the Camp John Hay Dev't. Co. when he nipped Japanese visitor Tonokazu Yoshinaga by a stroke.

Bob Sobrepeña, chair of the 2001 Professional Golf Tour, is all agog with the action and drama in the opening legs.

"The rivalry brewing between Mario (Siodina) and Roger (Antonio) and the rise of the young turks (first leg champion) Rey Pagunsan and Richard Sinfuego are signs of the things we can look forward to in the coming months," he said.

Sobrepeña also praised the local pros for exhibiting such high level of play despite the lack of tournaments the past two years.

The tour resumes on March 22-25 with the Sherwoods Hills Golf Club in Trece Martirez, Cavite hosting the third leg.

Junior golf sked bared

IT'S GOING to be a very busy summer for swinging local kids as the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines yesterday bared a 10-tournament schedule in exclusive courses starting late next month.

The circuit kicks off at the Tagaytay Highlands on March 28, 29, and 30 with the 2001 Jungolf Interclub jointly hosted by the Manila Golf Club and Aguinaldo following immediately on April 2, 3 and 5.

Most tournaments will serve as the qualifying events for three competitions abroad—the 23rd Asia-Pacific championships in Kucing, Malaysia on May 1-4, the Optimist championship in Florida and the Junior World in San Diego, California this July.

The other legs of the circuit: April 7-8 Camp John Hay; April 16-18 Manila Southwoods; April 23-25 Riviera; May 2-4 Canlubang; May 7-9 Sherwood Hills; May 14-15 Forest Hills; May 21-23 and May 28-30 Tat Filipinas.

Meanwhile, businessman Merwin Mediana was recently elected as the new president of the Jungolf Foundation, taking over the post previously held by Dr. Carlo Santos-Ocampo.

Also in the board are Jungolf founder Amalia Montecillo as chair, Danny Padilla as vice president, Myrna Paguia as secretary and Lilibeth de Villa as treasurer. Gerry Handog was appointed executive director.

Inquiries on the circuit can be coursed through tele-fax 645-1163 or at e-mail address jungolf@skyinet.net.

Love remains ahead

LOS ANGELES—At least everyone knows who they are chasing in the Nissan Open—Davis Love III, who finally separated himself from the pack Saturday with an unlikely birdie that gave him a three-stroke lead going into the final round.

Struggling with his driver on a cold, rainy day at Riviera Country Club, Love made a 40-foot (12-meter) birdie putt on the 17th and had a 3-under 68 to wind up in an ideal position.

For one thing, he finally got out of the soggy, chilly conditions just as the rain began to come down hard. Better yet, Love is the 54-hole leader at 203, never a bad place to be when more rain is in the forecast.

Corey Pavin, who returned to his old swing coach four weeks ago, took a big step toward returning to his old form. Winless since 1996, Pavin put on a magnificent putting display for Tiger Woods and had a 67 to get to 206.

Pavin was joined by Dennis Paulson (68) and Craig Barlow (70) and Australia's Robert Allenby (69), who was one stroke behind until he made a bogey on the difficult 18th and Love was making his birdie on the 17th.

Nick Price had a 69 and was among those at 207, while Woods made 16 pars and two birdies in his round of 69, which left him in a large group at 208. ***AP***

Confusion mars Pasig River race

Top 10 placers share purse

By June Navarro

CONFUSION marred yesterday's First Pasig River Heritage Marathon after several runners took different routes in the tricky 42.195-km distance from the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros to The Fort inside Global City in Makati.

Yet in a move to satisfy all clamoring parties, race organizers declared no winners but shared the P75,000 champion's purse among the top 10 finishers.

"I'll take full responsibility of the outcome. It was a difficult route to contain especially as we had to make last-minute adjustments due to rerouting of traffic along Edsa," explained event manager Ron Delos Reyes.

Long-distance runner Rolando Cedullo, who thought he had the race in the bag after cutting the tape first among 130 participants, clocked 2:14.04, which Delos Reyes doubted since it topped the record set by Roy Vence established in 1994.

Similarly, runner-up Joseph Rosete of Iligan City almost had his aura on Seventh heaven only to be told that he took the misguided route.

"All along I thought I had broken the record. But then I realized I took the wrong route," said Rosete, who crossed the tape with a time of 2:14.06.95.

Delos Reyes said Cedullo's pack took a right turn on Julia Vargas Street in Pasig instead of left, triggering the bedlam which the organizers readily compensated.

To make everybody happy, race organizers made up for the snafu by sharing the top three prizes with the top 30 finishers, who included veterans Ronald Despi, Reynaldo Delos Reyes, Edgardo Pedregoza and Rey Antoque in the full marathon.

In the distaff side, seasoned runners Hazel Madamba, Juvy Madridea, Jona Atienza and Mila Paje likewise divided the combined cash equivalent of the first to fourth placers.

Fired off by Col. Jun Cruz, chief of staff of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, at 5 am. on A. Soriano Street (former Aduana), the 42K distance proved to be a real and exciting challenge as the runners traversed through dark alleys, garbage-strewn roads, long stretches of well-paved roads and over 11 bridges en route to the finish line.

Chavit comes to Fely's rescue

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

GOVERNMENT red tape is merely one of the shortcomings in the scandal-ridden administration of deposed President Joseph Estrada. Friends of basketball great Fely Fajardo can attest to that.

Early last June, Fajardo now pushing 86, had surgery at the Chinese General Hospital where his left leg was amputated. When I wrote about Fajardo's operation here, there followed an outpouring of support for the oldest living Filipino basketball Olympian from well-meaning people, including the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office then chaired by Rosario Lopez.

Sadly, the promised PCSO financial assistance for Fajardo has not been given until now. And to think that the sweepstakes office is awash with cash! It's heartless, to say the least, to deny assistance to Hall of Famer Fely Fajardo, who gave the Philippines many treasured moments having carried the colors with patriotic zeal as player, coach and referee. Fely Fajardo is certainly deserving of government support.

Speaking of government support, I am happy to report that Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson is coming to Fajardo's rescue: Chavit has promised to talk to his sister, new PCSO chair Maria Livia Honeygirl de Leon. A longtime friend, Pastor "Boy" Saycon, who played a key role in People Power II, will also help Fajardo.

On the other hand, Col. Julian Malonso, former president of the Philippine Olympic Committee and Letran College Spanish professor, said he has contacted PCSO staffer Maricar Aquino, who likewise promised to look for Fajardo's papers at the sweepstakes office. While Dr. Fernando Carrascoso, a former PCSO general manager, has already met with Ms de Leon, whom he knows personally, and updated the new sweepstakes chair about Fajardo's plight.

Considered as the best forward in Philippine basketball during the 1930s, the 5-foot-8 Fajardo also excelled in baseball, softball, swimming and athletics. But it was in basketball where he became a household name. Fajardo scored several "firsts" in basketball. A member of the team that played in the 1948 London Olympic Games, Fajardo became the first Olympian to be named national cage coach in the 1952 Helsinki Games where the Philippines placed ninth. He also coached Letran Knights to their first NCAA senior championship in 1938, aside from mentoring the Carlos Loyzaga-led San Beda Red Lions to their first NCAA titles in 1951 and 1952.

RIVIERA BET

Rico Javier shows the form that made him a key player in Riviera's second-place finish in the 15th PAL Seniors Interclub Golf Championship won by Luisita on Saturday. JESS YUSON

FU spikers reach semis

By June Navarro

TITLE-FAVORITE Foundation University of Dumaguete came out of the quarterfinals unscathed, booking a semifinals ticket in Boracay Island yesterday in the men's division of the 5th Nestea Beach Volleyball University Challenge at the CCP grounds.

The fearsome twosome of Edward Balbuena and Isidro Bongcasan trampled every obstacle along the way, defeating Mapua Institute of Technology, 15-6, en route to their second semifinals trip.

Last year, they placed third after defending champion Letran College trounced them in the crossover semifinals.

But Balbuena and Bongcasan won't be alone in Boracay as their schoolmates—Ralph Mingueto and Kent Bulabon also in the men's division and women bets Rolyn Marquicias and Melanie Eralon—also snagged semifinal seats.

Formidable and menacing as they were, the Foundation University bets will gun for the Kings and Queens of the Beach Volley titles in Boracay on April 21-22.

"We've beaten them in some of our tune-up games. But I believe it would be an exciting match," said Mingueto in Tagalog, referring to schoolmates Balbuena and Bongcasan. "It all depends on the breaks and the familiarization of the turf."

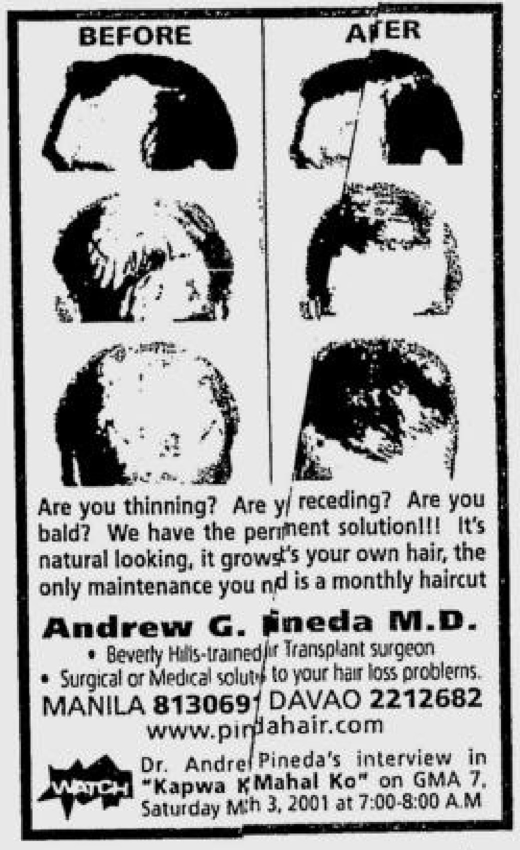
Last year's runner-up University of San Jose Recoletos-Cebu likewise grabbed two semifinal slots in the men's category as its team B shackled San Sebastian College I, 15-10, while its first team edged San Sebastian II, 15-13.

Norvie Labuga, the other half of the intimidating USJR squad, hopes the pairings in the semis won't pit them so as to kill their chances of meeting in the finals.

"But regardless of what happens, we will try to put one over our opponents even if we go against our schoolmates," said Labuga, who teamed up with Jamel Macasamat last year.

Aside from Marquicias and Eralon of Foundation, University of St. La Salle-Bacolod, Southwestern University-Cebu and defending champion San Sebastian College also snared Boracay trips.

San Sebastian's Jennifer Bohawe and Sheryl Tumayao crushed University of San Carlos-Cebu, 15-5, before humiliating Foundation I, 15-[illegible] on the way to the semifinals.



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Fotogs to boycott boxing events

By June Navarro

THE SPORTS Press Photographers Association of the Philippines won't cover any other boxing card the rest of the year following the shabby treatment its members got from the organizers of the Manny Pacquiao-Tetsutora Senrima WBC International Superbantamweight encounter Saturday night.

Photographers from different newspapers and sports magazines were prevented from taking pictures up close and were even shunned away for allegedly blocking the view of the VIPs, including top local government officials, who witnessed the fight at the Ynares Sports Center in Antipolo City.

Ramon Vecina, president of the SPPAP, denounced the act, saying it was the second time members of the association were treated unfairly by security personnel during Pacquiao's title defense.

Last year, a photographer from a sports magazine was bodily carried away by two armed security men while another was hit by a sharp object after the organizers failed to contain the fury of the crowd during Pacquiao's third title defense against Nadel Hussein of Australia.

"In this view, our association decided not to cover all future boxing events," said Vecina. "Once is enough, twice is too much considering our members were just doing their jobs."

Armand Clemente of the Manila Standard said Bobby Mondejar, ring announcer of boxing TV show "Blow by Blow," pushed him away from the ring and berated him in front of other photographers.

Mondejar's dastardly act was caught in pictures by several photographers. Mondejar and promoter Bebot Elorde couldn't be reached for comment.

Even sportswriters were barred from interviewing Pacquiao in the dugout after he took out Senrima in the fifth round.

RP 5 struggles . . .

(From page A24)

Zamar, however, said Calaguio had informed him that he and his fellow San Juan Knights will resume practice when the Nationals return to Manila.

In the two-on-two side event, a feature of the Rexona Survival Series, Philippine Youth members Marc Pingris, MC Caceres and Joshua Ramirez bested Cebuanos Elmer de la Cruz, Jerry Jaca and Jessie Dumantas, 8-6.

The Nationals, who are honing up for the Southeast Asia Basketball Association men's championship next month, flew to Bacolod and are scheduled to play the Negros Slashers yesterday.

Southern tour organizer Albert Almendralejo said the Nationals will next meet M. Lhuillier on Wednesday in Tangub City, where they will also conduct a cage clinic.

Roy Luarca

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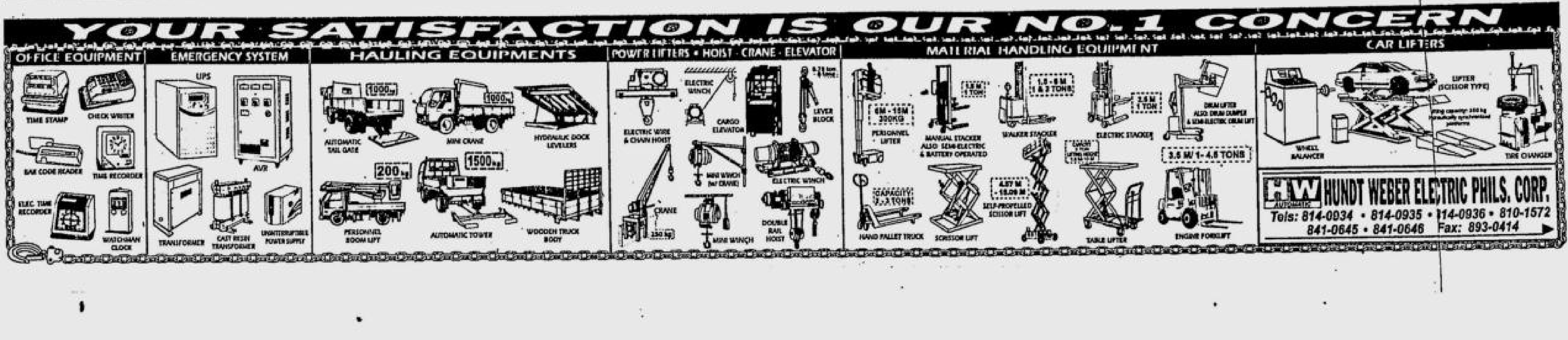

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Hingis outplays Tauziat

DUBAI—World No. 1 Martina Hingis of Switzerland lifted her game when it mattered Saturday to outclass the woman she calls "the Professor," Nathalie Tauziat of France, 6-4, 6-4, at the $565,000 Dubai Open. Hingis took the match in just 1 hour and 12 minutes and the $90,000 winner's check.

AP

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Ari retains OPBF crown

NAGOYA, Japan—Tiger Ari of the Philippines retained his OPBF superfeatherweight title by majority split decision over Ryhuhei Sugita of Japan. It was Ari's third title defense. Filipino judge Virgilio Garcia scored it 118-111 for Ari, Korean referee/judge David Chung scored it 115-111 for Ari and the Japanese judge declared it a draw.

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BASKETBALL: US NCAA—Charlotte 49ers vs Saint Louis Billikens at 8 a.m. (r- tomorrow at 1 a.m.), South Florida Bulls vs Memphis Tigers at 10:30 a.m. and North Carolina Tar Heels vs Virginia Cavaliers at 4 p.m. on ESPN
This Week in the NBA at 12:30 p.m. on CNN

GOLF: Nissan Open, Day One at 8 a.m.(r), Final Day at 9:30 p.m. on Star Sports

TENNIS: ATP Kroger St. Jude Indoor, Semifinals at 2 p.m.(r), Finals at 8 p.m. on Star Sports

Ginebra trips Purefoods 5

Alaska frustrates Pop Cola

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Philsports Arena)
5:15 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Mobiline
7:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Red Bull

BEANPOLE Alex Crisano proved his worth as Barangay Ginebra hammered out a 75-73 squeaker over Purefoods last night in the PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Crisano, molded by mentor Allan Caidic to be the Gin Kings' premiere slotman, barreled his way to 19 points and combined with Jun Limpot and rookie Mark Caguioa down the stretch to give Barangay Ginebra its fourth win in six matches. It was the Gin Kings' best start since Caidic took over the coaching reins two years ago.

"Knowing Vergel (Meneses) will not play tonight, they responded to the challenge and I'm very happy about their attitude," said Caidic, who got 24 points from Limpot and 17 markers from Caguioa.

With Meneses at sickbay, Caidic had a pep talk with his players prior to the match, which they took to heart and dealt the TJ Hotdogs their third defeat in six outings.

"I talked to my players, especially to Mark and Alex, before the game telling them to step up because the absence of Meneses will automatically deprive us of 20 points," said Caidic.

"But the key here is we were able to create some mismatches especially after Andy Seigle got into early foul trouble," he added.

Alaska survived the ire of former players Johnny Abarrientos and Poch Juinio with a 100-92 victory over Pop Cola in the second match.

Exasperated after the Aces shipped them to the Panthers during the off-season, Abarrientos and Juinio played superbly but couldn't get the numbers needed to upend the Aces, who got startling plays from Kenneth Duremdes and rookie John Arigo.

With the victory, the Aces snapped a four-game losing streak and climbed to a 2-4 record while inflicting the Panthers their third defeat in six games.

June Navarro

Scores:

GINEBRA 75—Limpot 24, Crisano 19, Caguioa 17, David 7, Helterbrand 4, Castelo 2, Magtulis 2, Calpito 0, Ong 0.

PUREFOODS 73—Castillo 21, Evangelista 14, Patrimonio 13, Seigle 9, Pumaren 7, Feihl 5, Yap 4, Yee 0, Fernandez 0.

Quarters: 17-20; 40-38; 54-56; 75-73

RP 5 struggles to defeat Cebu

THE PHILIPPINE team got its first taste of competition and scrambled to a 73-72 victory over the Cebu Gems Saturday night in the opener of its southern tour at the Cebu City Coliseum.

Dropping their defenses in the final quarter, the Nationals allowed the Gems to wipe out a 14-point deficit and wrest the lead at 72-70, less than 3 minutes left.

Prized recruit Max Delantes and Juvenile Yu capped that Gems surge, which drew wild applause from the hometown crowd, with back-to-back baskets.

Eddie Laure countered with a jumper and a free throw to push the Nationals back on top with 30 seconds to go. Gem Roy Lura missed on the ensuing play, but National Egay Echaves also bungled two free throws for the final tally.

"It was a good start for the boys. They had an early taste of what it is to play against the crowd," said national coach Boyzie Zamar. "My rotation really got affected by the sudden absence of Calaguio (Chris), Rodriguez (Omanzie) and Victolero (Chito)."

RP 5 STRUGGLES/ A23

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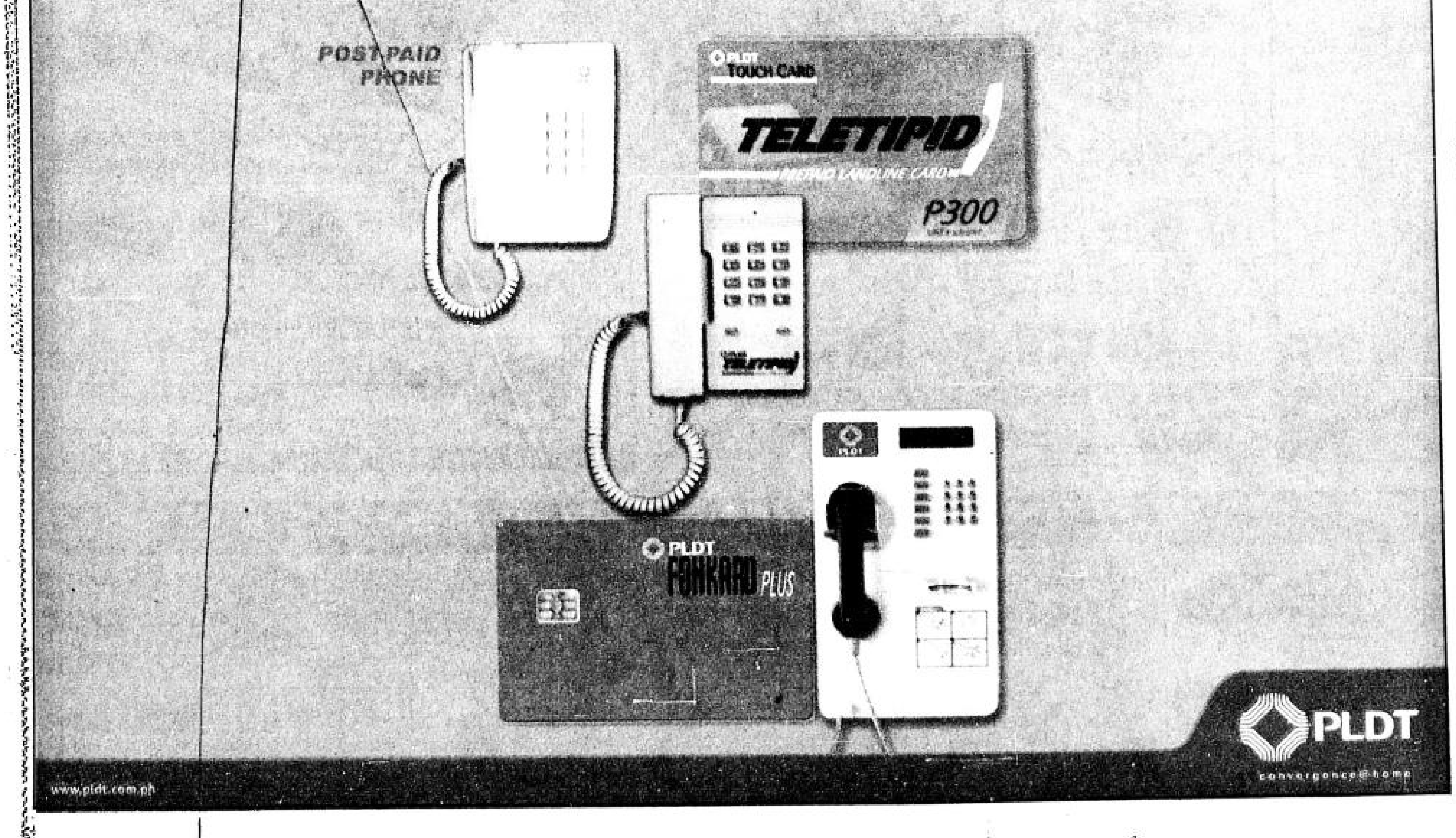

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- Man sleeping in pedicab, guard killed A27
- Rugby boys assault 5-year-old girl A27

Worker, 19, charged with rape and slay of colonel's daughter

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

AN AUTO shop caretaker yesterday confessed to police he raped and then killed the 15-year-old daughter of a retired Army colonel in Caloocan City on Friday.

Police yesterday filed rape with homicide charges against Leo Lloyd Dizon, 19, of Camarin, Caloocan, before the Prosecutor's Office for the gruesome rape and murder of third year high school student Richelle Mamaril, of Sta. Christina Homes in Barangay Camarin, also in Caloocan.

Mamaril is said to be an adopted daughter of retired Army colonel Eusebio Mamaril.

No bail was recommended for Dizon's temporary release. But police released Virgilio Delano, 18, who was arrested with Dizon and whom Dizon earlier identified during interrogation as the one who raped and killed the girl.

Dizon also claimed Delano had an unidentified companion who also took part in the rape and killing.

Passerby Jurlito Gutilyon found the girl's body about 5 a.m. Friday on an empty lot on Camachile Street about a block away from her house, police said.

The girl's throat was cut and her head hacked open. She was wearing no underwear.

Police said she was first raped before she was killed.

The girl ran away from home after she discovered she was adopted, police said. Her biological parents were said to have entrusted her to Mamaril, a retired Philippine Army colonel.

The girl became rebellious, refused to go home, and sought refuge from her friends, including Dizon, said Supt. Romulo Ramos of the Camarin police station.

Dizon apparently took advantage of her con-

WORKER/A28

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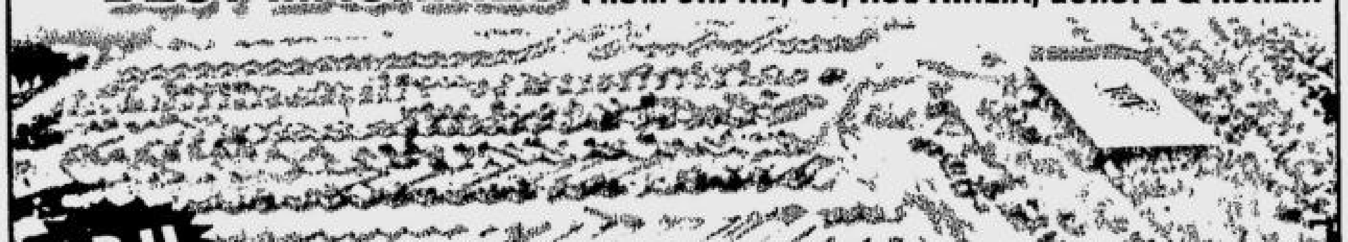

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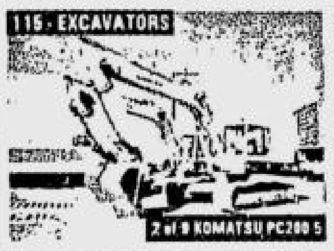

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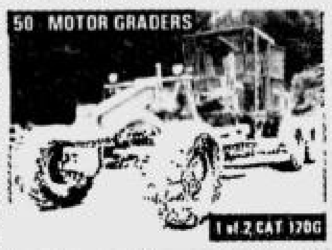

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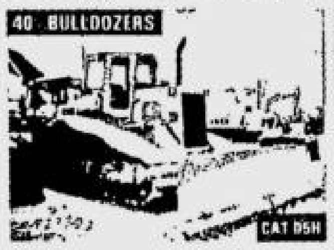

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Policeman to 'shoot' suspicious characters

BY AGNES E. DONATO

THE MANDALUYONG police chief has issued a warning that dubious-looking characters in the city might just be shot on the spot. And policemen would do that—with a camera.

Supt. Jose Gentiles said the city's policemen would now also be armed with cameras so they could take pictures of people who look suspicious in a bid to avert street crimes such as robberies, snatching and others.

Gentiles described the move as "spot-checking" and said the local police already have four cameras. More cameras would be bought to arm detectives and foot patrol policemen, Gentiles said.

The "camera men" would be positioned in crime-prone areas like banks and commercial establishments, he added.

The photographs would be scanned and recorded in the detective beat patrol's computer database, which is now being constructed, Gentiles said.

But the police chief admitted that to make the drive effective, policemen would have to depend more on their gut-feel and intuition as they would have to observe the moves of a lot of people.

He clarified that the rights of innocent people would not be violated and that charges would not be filed on the basis of a picture and without solid evidence.

"Upholding other people's human rights has always been our primary concern," he said. "We recognize the need to moderate crime prevention measures like this and we will not abuse our power."

He said field officers would be briefed and given specific "territories" to familiarize them with the area and the people who usually pass it.

Last Tuesday in Mandaluyong, four men who came on board motorcycles robbed a real estate broker of almost P1 million which he had just withdrawn from the bank.

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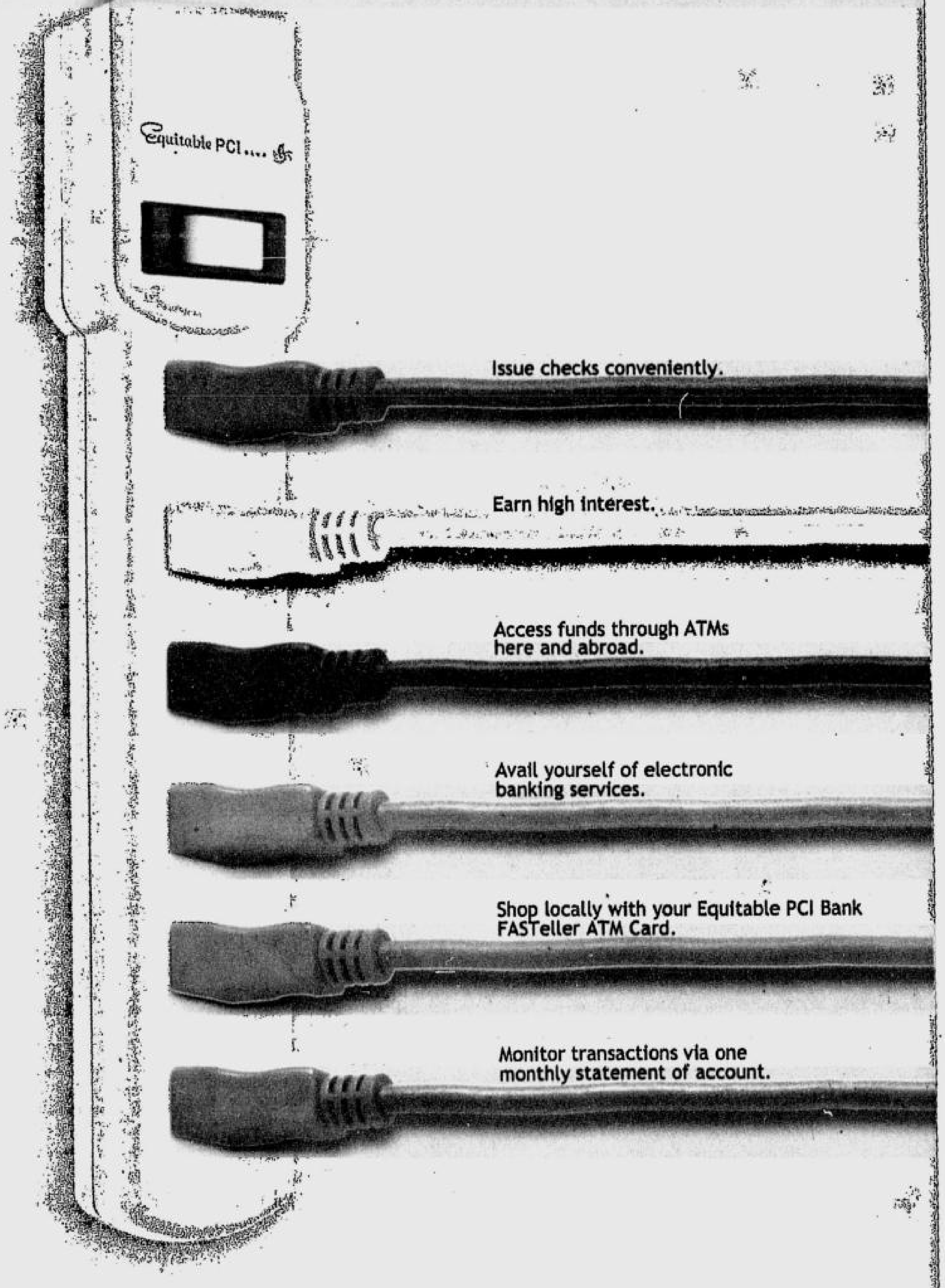
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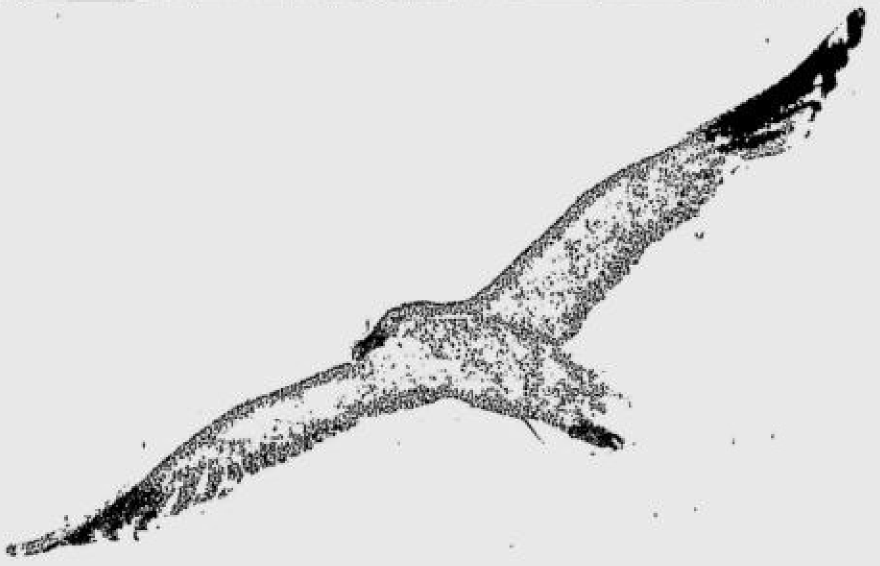

FLYING HIGH INTO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

We're on our 3rd year and we continue to fly high

As we celebrate our third year in developing young minds and providing quality education in the country, we are elated to spread our wings and soar to greater heights in creating a better individual out of every student who graduates from Southeast Asian College, Inc..

In a short span of three years, we can bravely say that SACI has given young Filipinos the opportunity to rise above the grasp of mediocrity, therefore enabling them to reach their dreams no matter how high.

On its third anniversary, Southeast Asian College, Inc. will continue to scale the challenges the new millennium brings and contribute to the upliftment of education in the years ahead.

Messages

Renato De Villa
Republic of the Philippines
Executive Secretary

With great satisfaction and joy, I extend my warmest greetings to the officials, faculty, and staff of the Southeast Asian College in celebration of your 3rd foundation with the theme "SACI: *flying high in the new millennium.*" You have successfully surpassed another year of hardship and challenges. This foundation day will mark the start of your renewed effort in prospering a more effective educational system responsive to the needs of the times.

As of this date, you have done your share in preparing the Filipino youth for a better future by providing them with a quality and relevant education that will help them cope with the challenges of the new millennium. You have adequately armed the younger generation with the skills that will make them confidently survive in the global competition of this era.

Again, congratulations!

RENATO DE VILLA
Executive Secretary

Peter P. Laurel
Southeast Asian College Inc.
Chairman

It is with great pride that I congratulate all of us in the third foundation anniversary of our institution, Southeast Asian College Inc.

Through our joint efforts and serious undertaking, we have triumphantly reached another year of dedication and service to the Filipino youth. Let us take every opportunity to provide a better future to the younger generation in continuing our mission.

Finally, let us dedicate our efforts to the Lord.

PETER P. LAUREL
Chairman

Delfin A. Tan
Southeast Asian College Inc.
President

The commemoration of our 3rd anniversary with the theme "SACI: *Flying High In The New Millennium*", compels everyone of us, most especially the young Filipinos, to arm ourselves against the challenges of global competition in order to ensure success in developing our economy.

Through our joint efforts and dedication, we aim to attain this very important goal. Our foundation comes at the time of healing for our country. Let us work together as our country stands on the edge of the new millennium.

My warmest congratulations to all of us.

Godspeed.

DELFIN A. TAN, M.D.
President

Edita F. Enatsu
Southeast Asian College Inc.
Exec. V.P./Treasurer

For three years, the Southeast Asian College Inc., as part of our philosophy, has been the exponent of Philippine educational progress. The contribution we have made for the advancement of different professions speaks of our adherence to the tenets of quality education.

Undoubtedly, our institution now becomes a melting pot of various students - young and old, working and full-time, gifted and mediocre, well off and well without. This is so because we envisioned to provide avenue for national prosperity as we veered towards producing professionals.

Our positive role in nation building is expressed in our theme "SACI: *Flying High In The New Millennium*" and the advent of our third anniversary reminds us of our solemn dedication to keep in horizon with the vision of our known educators.

Towards the new millennium year, bear my exalted greeting to our founding anniversary.

EDITA F. ENATSU
Executive Vice
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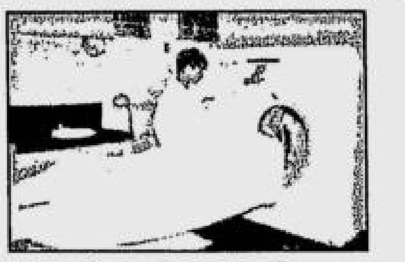

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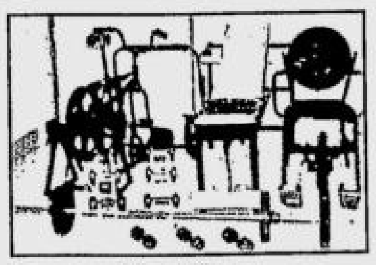

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Man sleeping in pedicab, guard killed

By Christian V. Esguerra

A MAN sleeping inside a parked pedicab in Tondo and a security guard in Port Area were killed in separate shooting incidents yesterday morning and on Saturday, police said.

Early yesterday morning, a stray bullet hit Rodolfo Ulep, 46, while he was sleeping inside a pedicab parked in front of his house on Dagupan Street in Tondo, police said.

The stray bullet from a homemade .38-caliber revolver hit Ulep in the back of the head. He died on the way to the Mary Johnston Hospital, said PO3 Rodelio Lingcong of the Western Police District Homicide Division.

Investigators said the fatal bullet was meant for PO1 Nonito Binayug, who was accosting two unidentified suspects.

Binayug was about to leave his house, also on Dagupan Street, when he heard two gunshots, police said. He went to check and saw the two suspects walking in the vicinity.

When Binayug tried to confront the suspects, one of them fired at him with a handgun but the bullet instead hit the sleeping Ulep, police said.

Ulep's body was brought to the Sanctuary Funeral Homes for autopsy.

At about 9 p.m. on Saturday, security guard Pepe Usman, 37, of P. Paredes Street, Sampaloc, was shot dead by Dats Abdul, 19, a laborer and resident of Baseco Compound, Port Area, according to SPO1 Danilo Vidad of the WPD Homicide Division.

Usman died while being taken to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center in Sta. Cruz, also in Manila.

Initial investigation showed that Usman was walking along Hidaldo Street in Quiapo at about 9 p.m. Saturday when Abdul and a still unidentified companion approached him from behind.

Before Usman could react, Abdul had already pulled out a handgun of still unknown caliber and shot him in the back of the head, police said.

Abdul allegedly fired another shot that hit Jenny Deldio, 21, a cashier and a resident of P. Zamora Street, Paco, Manila, police said.

Deldio was hit in the left arm and was rushed to the United Doctors Medical Center.

Abdul was arrested by members of the Barbosa Police Community Precinct.

Rugby boys assault 5-year-old girl

"RUGBY boys" who were high on the addictive substance tried to strangle a 5-year-old girl in Makati City Friday night, police said.

SPO4 Columbia Perarren of the Makati City Police Women's and Children Section said the girl is a resident of Barangay Bangkal in Makati.

Police managed to arrest one of the suspects, William Beltran, 19, a resident of Pasig Line, Manila. He is detained at the Makati City Jail.

The girl's father said the attack occurred at around 10:30 p.m. Friday after he brought along his daughter to their canteen in Barangay Bangkal.

The girl had just finished having supper when she wandered away from the canteen. A group of passing rugby boys led by Beltran suddenly pulled her aside and started to strangle her.

Juan Arcoal, 32, who was just passing by, saw the attack and shouted for help, prompting Beltran and his group to flee. Responding policemen were able to arrest Beltran later.

Beltran told police his companions goaded him into attacking the child.

The girl sustained some bruises. His parents said they would file charges of physical injuries against Beltran.

Alcuin Papa

Gloria gov't squandering a real gem

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(LONE CHAMP: Cebu's Malcolm Tuñacao, lone reigning Filipino world boxing champion, left for Thailand on Friday for the second defense of his WBC flyweight crown. The title bout on Friday, March 2, is scheduled in a Thai province some six hours by bus from Bangkok. Tuñacao's manager, Rex Wakee Salud, swears the champ is in his finest form since winning the crown from Medgoen 3-K Battery, conqueror of Manny Pacquiao, in Thailand last May. Unfortunately for Filipino fans, there will be no local television coverage of the bout. But the fight would hopefully be beamed via Thailand's Channel 7 and could be seen on local cable TV.)

* * *

OUR new government may be interested to know that we have in our midst a gem of a lady by the name of Lydia de Vega.

She's no ordinary sports legend, not a simple gold medal winner who would opt to rest on her laurels. She's what we may call a real-life wonder woman.

The other week, she got shattered, her heart crushed by the savage loss of her four-year-old son. The boy died on the spot after he was run over by a passenger jeepney that stole into an otherwise safe and quiet street deep in the heart of Proj. 4, Quezon City.

She has accepted the loss and offered everything to the Lord, Lydia told me when I visited her.

Of course, she had insurmountable regret. They have hurt her son, oh so terribly, she protested. *Sinaktan nilang masyado si* Utoy.

John Michael, 4, was hit by the rushing jeepney which had strayed out of route. The boy's head was crushed like a can of empty milk.

But even that savagery Lydia has now forgiven. All in the name of love and peace.

* * *

Listen. "Saying they have learned so many lessons in the death of their son, Lydia de Vega-Mercado said she and her husband Paulo have found it in their hearts to forgive and move on."

That was my old friend Eddie Alinea, veteran sports chronicler and a trusted ally of Lydia, writing for the Manila Times.

At press time, it was not clear if the driver, a certain Knoreel Valiente Tamayo, has bothered to approach the bereaved couple that has vowed not to press any charges.

Yes, Lydia and Paulo have been devastated. But if they sent the driver to jail, Lydia reasoned out, they would be depriving his family of a breadwinner. They would be an instrument to a tragedy themselves, she said. *"Kung ipakukulong namin siya, walang bubuhay sa pamilya niya,"* Lydia told Alinea.

There was an expert advice that the couple should at least teach the driver a lesson. At least two senators, both great fans of Lydia, offered financial and legal support.

All Lydia and Paulo could say was thank you very, very much.

* * *

You know, Lydia said, when Paulo and she decided to forgive, their misery was greatly lessened. *Nabawasan ang bigat ng aming kalooban.*

The rare gesture brought a deep feeling of relief: *Ganoon pala kasarap ang magpatawad.*

Lydia explained: "This I have learned from being an athlete: Whatever happens, adversities, atrocities towards my person, should not stop me from pursuing what I intend to be."

That Tuesday morning tragedy, Lydia said, also gave them the opportunity to realize how people love them. *Ang daming nakiramay.* Sports leaders, government officials, even media men. They all came in full force just to express their sorrow, convey their support.

Lydia has also been saying that with the death of their son, other parents would now be doubly concerned about the safety of their children. Even drivers, often drawn to their primitive instincts in a bid to survive in the asphalt jungle, could also be affected and could start handling the wheels with some care and concern for others.

Then her final message: "Most importantly, may our act of forgiveness send a message to all of us that whatever problems we encounter, and there will be many, there is God to help us survive these. That we must move on and continue the task God has given us when He created us. We're fortunate because, besides God, we also have John Michael to guide us."

* * *

Yes, what I have written is just a replay of what other people have heard and read on the tragedy.

Frankly speaking, that humbling experience, mainly the healing words and wisdom imparted by Lydia de Vega, Asian sprint legend, should have landed in the front page of every paper.

It's a pity that it has obviously been overtaken by other rich events in our very backyard.

What's truly tragic, though, is that our new government itself has overlooked the existence of a gem in our midst.

No, this is not to say that Lydia is crying to be tapped and rewarded. She's not that kind of girl.

But if the government bothers about values and talents, it should reward itself by tapping Lydia to be part of its sports team.

We are inclined to suggest a commissioner's post in the Philippine Sports Commission, where Lydia could generously share her wisdom and experience, not to mention her sweet, healing spirit.

Unfortunately for all of us sports fans, Lydia would be terribly out of place in a gang of non-achievers.

Unless the government learns how to heal itself.

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8 MARCH 2001
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The Asian crisis pointed out the need to restructure domestic capital markets to be able to ensure sustainable growth in the region. The World Competitiveness Yearbook 2000 stressed that aside from being underdeveloped, ASEAN-5 capital markets are also viewed as risky, given the perception that insider trading is common in the markets, and that rights and responsibilities of shareholders (especially minority) are not well defined. Though there have been legislation to restructure markets, many economies still need further reform and redirection in this regard.

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Councilor dares to go up against veterans

By Leah Salterio

HIS VISION for the country sounds simple but it is far from being easy to achieve: to make the country a place where people can sleep soundly at night, wake up well in the morning with food to eat and work to go to.

When he was younger, Quezon City 4th District Councilor Marcel Rillo didn't believe it could happen. But after gaining political experience, he is convinced that change is possible for the land.

Rillo, 32, will soon end his first term as councilor and he believes he is ready for a higher public office. In May, he is running for congressman of Quezon City's 4th District.

He will be up against political veterans—former Bicol Rep. Edcel Lagman and former Quezon City Vice Mayor Charito Planas. His mayoral candidate is movie star Rudy Fernandez.

Rillo says his preparations for a life in politics started in college, when he became a student leader while taking up business management at the Ateneo de Manila University.

However, he was not encouraged by his parents, the late Eufemio Rillo and Milagros Castro Rillo, to go into politics.

His paternal great-grandfather Eugenio Baltao was a Nueva Ecija congressman and was also a member of the Constitutional Commission. Rillo's paternal grandfather was a judge.

"When I was growing up, my family didn't want to have anything to do with politics, so they turned to business," Rillo said.

After graduation, he worked for Far East Bank as international desk leader and became a member of the Bankers Association of the Philippines.

"My job was handling dollar accounts and reinvesting the money in foreign banks to earn higher interest," he said.

A year later, he entered the real estate business. In 1992, he ran for councilor but lost. He did the same thing in 1995 and lost again.

In 1998, he finally convinced his family to support his candidacy and that spelled the start of his political victory.

The eldest in a brood of six boys, Rillo is not the only politician in the family. His younger brother Marvin is also a councilor in Quezon City and president of Sangguniang Kabataan. Another brother, Melvin, is the No. 1 councilman of New Manila.

Named after French boxer Marcel Celdran, Rillo with his good looks could have easily become a movie star. His father used to produce movies through the family's Femi Productions.

"My heart is always with the movie industry but I know I don't have the talent," Rillo said.

RILLO

He admits he once tried to pursue Kris Aquino, but contented himself with being her friend. "Kris is really my crush and I admire her as a person," he said.

Councilor Rillo is the chair of the Quezon City council committee on education.

Asked if he is daunted by the presence of the "Spice Boys" in Congress, Rillo simply said, "I know them."

On his pursuit of a congressional seat, he said: "I lost twice when I ran for councilor but that didn't stop me. I was able to turn myself from a loser to a winner and now, I'm running for Congress. (Abraham) Lincoln lost six times and he never gave up."

LTO uses banks vs corruption

TO help eradicate corruption at the Land Transportation Office (LTO), people who have transactions with the agency will no longer be paying their fees to the LTO.

By the end of March, they can pay their dues directly to banks, according to the newly appointed LTO chief, retired general Edgardo Abenina.

"All of the fees that should be paid would no longer go through the LTO," Abenina said on Friday in a weekly press forum at the Sulo Hotel. "The payments for driver's licenses or registration can be paid directly to banks."

Abenina explained that LTO-accredited banks would be able to receive the payments since they would be connected to the national treasury.

"Once the payment is deposited, it would be immediately registered with the treasury," he explained.

He said he is still talking with different banks that are interested in the proposed program and the other government agencies that would be involved.

"I find it hard to listen when people say that the LTO is an agency immersed in corruption," he said. "We have to start from somewhere but the changes should be done systematically."

He said that at present, a driver's license applicant has to go through 11 "decision points" before his or her license is approved.

Abenina said he told the company computerizing the LTO's work to "shorten that process to only two points—the entry and the exit points."

He said that the medical checkup that each applicant has to undergo could be given to the Department of Health or to private medical associations who would provide their services for free.

Philip C. Tubeza

'CENTENNIAL MAN'

They call him Tatay Ato. A short, stocky man with a cheery disposition, Fortunato Landas looks like he's pushing 60. He turned 100 on Jan. 20 and may be the oldest living resident of Navotas. That distinction was made official early this month, during the town's foundation day when he was feted by Mayor Toby Tiangco as Navotas' "centennial man." Tatay Ato says he always walks, he doesn't take a ride. He visits the municipal hall almost every day, helping applicants for senior citizens IDs. He is the Senior Citizen chapter president in his community on C-4 Road. He doesn't smoke, doesn't drink and doesn't stay up late. He eats vegetables, fish and fruits. He has five children: a lawyer, an engineer, a college teacher, and two who are working abroad.

2 traffic men caught taking bribes on Edsa

AGENTS of the elite Intelligence Group of the Philippine National Police have been fielded to major thoroughfares in Metro Manila to arrest mulcting traffic enforcers.

On Edsa on Friday, two traffic enforcers from the Metro Manila Development Authority got the surprise of their lives when PNP-IG agents caught them in the act of accepting bribes from motorists.

Chief Supt. Romulo Sales, head of the PNP-IG, identified the arrested MMDA traffic enforcers as Renato Mulano and Rudy Casimiro.

"Charges of robbery with intimidation will be filed against them," Sales said.

The PNP-IG agents initially took over the job of arresting mulcting officers from the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force agents, who are now concentrating on fighting syndicated crime syndicates, particularly kidnap-for-ransom-groups.

Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, acting PNP chief, was prompted to order the deployment of PNP-IG agents by persistent reports that mulcting traffic enforcers were back on the streets victimizing drivers, particularly at night.

During the past PNP administration, then PNP chief Director General Panfilo Lacson managed to instill fear among street mulcters when he deployed PAOCTF agents on major thoroughfares. Dozens of traffic enforcers were arrested.

However, records show that not one of the cases involving these suspects prospered in courts. Administrative charges, however, were filed against them.

Dave Veridiano

Stabbed to death over radio repair

PEDICAB driver Ruben Santos, 42, of Potrero, Malabon lost his life on Friday over a transistor radio.

Feliciano Base, 38, a vendor of Anonas Road, also in Potrero, stabbed Santos in the chest, said PO3 Ferdinand Espiritu.

Santos, of Lanzones Road, Potrero, went to Base's house around 5:30 p.m. Friday to get his radio which Base was repairing, Espiritu said.

But Base told Santos he was not finished repairing the radio and that it was still missing some spare parts, Espiritu said.

Base also told Santos he had to pay more because the radio needed additional repairs.

The two men argued until Base rushed to the kitchen, grabbed a 12-inch kitchen knife and stabbed Santos, Espiritu said.

Santos was declared dead on arrival at the Manila Central University hospital.

Base tried to flee but his neighbors caught him, Espiritu said.

Base is now detained at the Malabon police station. Police filed homicide charges against him before the Malabon prosecutor's office.

Philip C. Tubeza

Worker, 19, charged . . .

(From page A25)

fusion and raped her inside the auto mechanic's shop, where he was working as caretaker, police said. He killed her and dumped her body on the empty lot, police said.

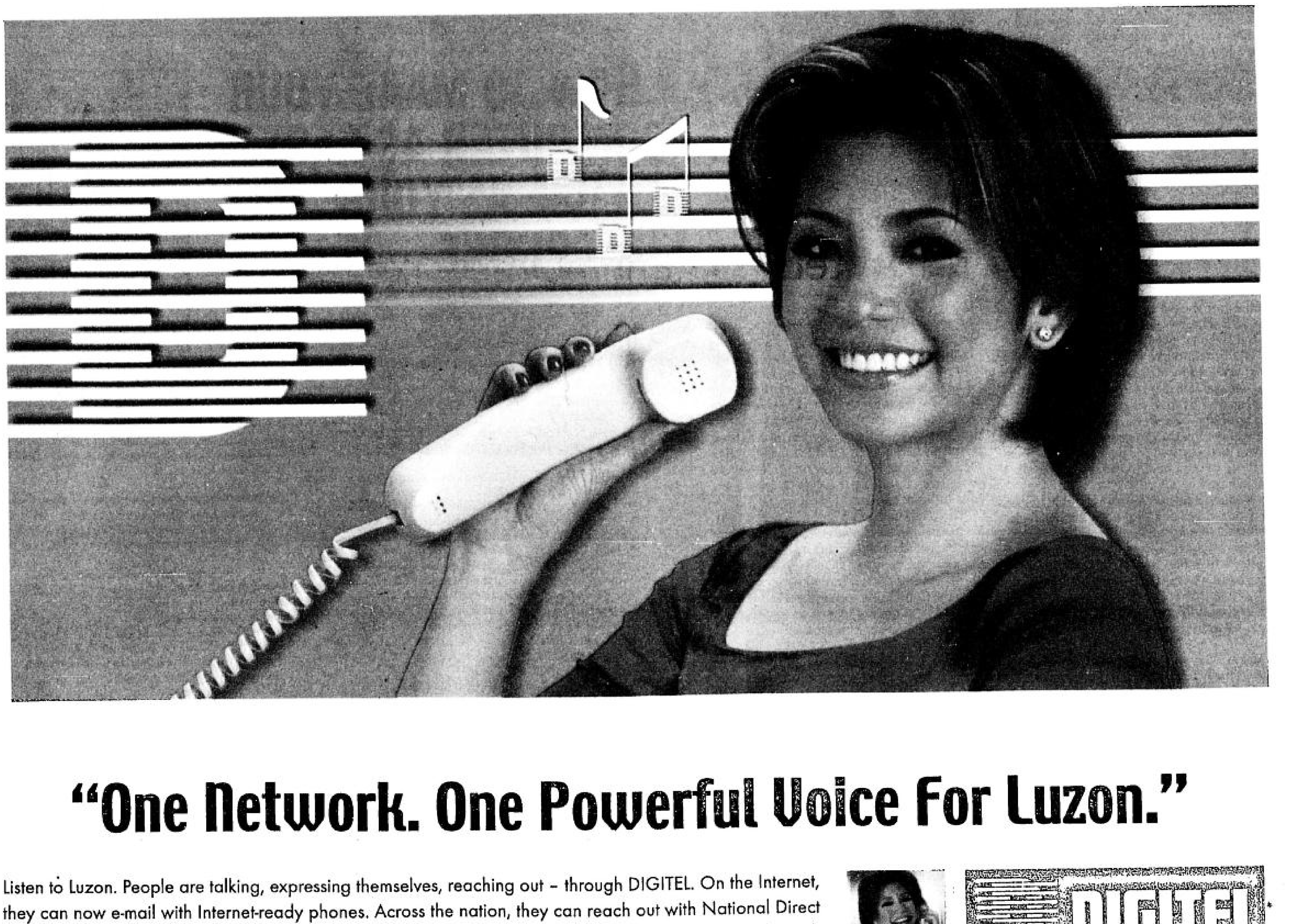
When the girl's body was found, police followed a trail of fresh blood that led them to the auto shop, which was about 20 meters from the empty lot. They said they saw Dizon wearing a bloodstained shirt and found in the shop a knife they believe to have been used in the killing.

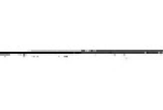
During interrogation, Dizon said the girl, Delano and another man arrived in the auto shop at about 10 p.m. Thursday and asked if they could sleep there.

He said he agreed. He said he later went out to buy cigarettes and when he returned, Delano was raping the girl while the other man was slitting her throat.

Dizon told police he asked the men to stop but they kicked him.

Yesterday, he finally confessed to the rape and killing, police said.





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2	ULTRA SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
5	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	ULTRA SURROUND	TUHOG
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MS. CONGENIALITY
9	ULTRA SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
10	ULTRA SURROUND	DEMON GATE

TUTUBAN CENTER		2514302
1	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG

SM CEBU		2313874
1	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS

SM ILOILO		3209422
1	ULTRA SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
2	ULTRA SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
3	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MALIKOT ANG AGOS NG TUBIG
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
7	ULTRA SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
8	ULTRA SURROUND	THE YARDS

SM PAMPANGA		7128015
1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	102 DALMATIANS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CONTENDER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HAPLOS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME

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1 TUSONG TWOSOME	1 CAST AWAY In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	5 SNATCH In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	1 WOMAN ON TOP In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	1 MS. CONGENIALITY THX (Advance Screening) In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 MS. CONGENIALITY (Advance Screening)	2 WOMAN ON TOP In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 FAMILY MAN In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 MS. CONGENIALITY (Advance Screening) In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 PAY IT FORWARD In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 TUHOG	3 MS. CONGENIALITY THX (Advance Screening) In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 PAY IT FORWARD In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 PAY IT FORWARD In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 CAST AWAY In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 DEMON GATE	4 THE ROAD HOME (Phil. Premiere) In DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film		4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage	4 SNATCH In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
				5 WOMAN ON TOP In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Filinvest Festival Cinema
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	WOMAN ON TOP
2 (SDDS)	SNATCH
3 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
4 GOLD (DTS)	PAY IT FORWARD
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	MS. CONGENIALITY
6 GOLD (SDDS)	FAMILY MAN
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	102 DALMATIANS
9	TUHOG
10	TUSONG TWOSOME

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	TUHOG
2	VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
4	RESERVE
5	
6 (DTS)	

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana Cinemax 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
2 (DTS)	MS. CONGENIALITY
3	TUHOG

Masagana Cinema
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	TUHOG
2	CAST AWAY
3	TUSONG TWOSOME

Starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	CAST AWAY
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	TUHOG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PAY IT FORWARD
5	WAY OF THE GUN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	TUHOG
3	TUSONG TWOSOME
4	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5	DEMON GATE
6	CAST AWAY
7	PAY IT FORWARD
8	MS. CONGENIALITY

Uniwide Metromall
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00

1	NAKED LIES
2	ANG BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
3	TABI TABI PO
4	–
5	
6	

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00

1	TALAHIB AT ROSAS
2	LITTLE HEROES LOST IN CHINA
3	TABI TABI PO
4	

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	BOOBA
2	VERTICAL LIMIT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	TUHOG
3	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	TUSONG TWOSOME
A	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626

1	
3	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	CAST AWAY
2	FAMILY MAN
3	DEMON GATE
4	PAY IT FORWARD
5	TUSONG TWOSOME
6	TUHOG
7 (DTS)	MS. CONGENIALITY
8 (SDDS)	SNATCH
9 (DOLBY)	WOMAN ON TOP

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4	TUHOG
5	
6	

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	TUHOG
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	MS. CONGENIALITY
4 (SDDS)	PAY IT FORWARD
5	DEMON GATE
6 (DOLBY)	SNATCH
7 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
8	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
9	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	TUHOG
4	DEMON GATE
5 (SDDS)	SNATCH
6	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
7 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
8	CAST AWAY

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	DEMON GATE
2	HAPLOS
3 (DTS)	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	TUHOG
5 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
6 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
7 (DOLBY)	TUSONG TWOSOME

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	TUHOG

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	TUHOG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	TUHOG
Lords	HAPLOS
Jemel	TUHOG

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TUHOG
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	PAY IT FORWARD
4	MS. CONGENIALITY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	TUSONG TWOSOME

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238

1	CAST AWAY
2	TUHOG
3	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4	TUSONG TWOSOME
5	MS. CONGENIALITY

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

1	TUSONG TWOSOME
2	TUHOG
3	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4	STAR DANCER
5	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
6	KING COBRA 5

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	TUHOG
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	TUSONG TWOSOME
2	TUHOG
3 (DTS)	CAST AWAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	TUHOG
2 (DTS)	TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DOLBY)	CAST AWAY
4	HAPLOS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	TUHOG
2	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
3	WAY OF THE GUN
4 (DTS)	TUSONG TWOSOME

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE CONTENDER
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
4	TUHOG
5	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	TUHOG
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	TUHOG
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	HAPLOS
2	102 DALMATIANS
3	IKA - 7 GLORYA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	THE CONTENDER
2	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
3	TUSONG TWOSOME

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	TUSONG TWOSOME
2	TUHOG
3	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4	HAPLOS

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

1 (DTS)	TUHOG
2 (DTS)	HAPLOS

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	TUSONG TWOSOME

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	VIRGIN WIFE
2	VITAL PARTS
3	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4	WHAT WOMEN WANT

Berma
tel 879.2168

1	
2	

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	CAST AWAY
2	TUHOG
3	TUSONG TWOSOME
4	102 DALMATIANS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	CAST AWAY
2	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	FAMILY MAN
4 (DTS EX)	102 DALMATIANS

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a special presentation

Rock band showdown at Cuneta Astrodome

THE ALTERNATIVE rock music scene gets a refreshing boost for 2001 with "Explode 2001," a mega-concert event that gathers the best bands in the land in one night of masterful guitar riffs and vocal exhibitions.

Performing in the gig are the multi-awarded, multi-platinum Eraserheads, Rivermaya, Wolfgang, Color it Red, Barbie's Cradle, Siakol, Cheese, Mojofly, Greyhoundz and Slapshock.

The concert happens March 24, 8 p.m. at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"Explode 2001" should be able to prove that great rock music can stand the test of time and any economic crisis.

The show is another offering from Beyond Entertainment Co., whose vision is to come up with loud-impact entertainment beyond audience's expectations.

"We want to make shows with a difference," says Mary Grace Bacsa, general manager and executive producer. "We want to push people's concept of live entertainment to new grounds."

Bacsa is joined by Mariel M. Cruz, cinematographer and lighting director for TV, and also the operations manager and executive producer of Beyond Entertainment. Marketing director and associate producer is Herminia Estialbo of HBE Entertainment.

"Explode 2001" is the first major event of Beyond Entertainment this year.

For sponsorships or ticket information, contact 0919-6522550 or Beyond Entertainment office at 534-7643/534-7641/0917-9420665.

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2. SNATCH
3. TUSONG TWOSOME
4. WOMAN ON TOP
5. DEMON GATE
6. PAY IT FORWARD
7. THE FAMILY MAN

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IMUS
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1. PAY IT FORWARD
2. TUHOG
3. DEMON GATE
4. CAST AWAY
5. TUSONG TWOSOME
6. 102 DALMATIANS

BACOLOD
(034)441-0483

1. VERTICAL LIMIT
2. CAST AWAY
3. WHAT WOMEN WANT
4. BOUNCE
5. TABI TABI PO
6. SYOTA NG BAYAN

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	TUHOG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TUSONG 2 SOME
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	CAST AWAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SNATCH
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PAY IT FORWARD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	102 DALMATIANS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	WAY OF THE GUN
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	TUHOG
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	PAY IT FORWARD
MIRAMAR	ARAYY / HUNGER FOR LOVE
ODEON	WAY OF THE GUN
ODEON-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
ROBEN	TUSONG 2 SOME
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA - 7 GLORYA
TIMES	UNBREAKABLE / REPLACEMENT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	TUHOG
QUEZON-1	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	TUHOG
OCEAN CINEMA-A	BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
OCEAN CINEMA-B	KATAYAN
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-2	SNATCH
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TUHOG
CINEMA-2	TUSONG TWOSOME
CINEMA-3	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WAY OF THE GUN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-6	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-7	VIRGIN WIFE
CINEMA-8	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
CINEMA-12	SNATCH
CINEMA-14	DEMON GATE
CINEMA-15	TUSONG TWOSOME
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-3	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	WOMAN ON TOP
CINEMA-2	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-3	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-4	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-5	SNATCH
CINEMA-6	MS. CONGENIALITY

Donita guests in sitcom

MTV Asia veejay Donita Rose joins Joey de Leon, Jomari Yllana, Elizabeth Oropesa, Arnel Ignacio, Ara Mina and Klaudia Koronel in "Kiss Muna," 9:30 tonight on GMA.

Third (Jomari) and BJ (Arnel)'s drinking spree is interrupted by a knock on the door. The "visitor" is an old woman asking for a glass of water.

For Arnel's act of kindness (though he gave her a beer instead of water), she gives him a magic "sando" which turns him into a female with a striking resemblance to Donita Rose.

Who will fall for "the new Arnel?" Is it Jomari, who would then be technically making love not to Donita but to Arnel?

LOUIE'S CINEMA

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PAY IT FORWARD
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THE FAMILY MAN
(PG 13 RT - 2:00)
February 26 -Monday
6:00 - 11:00 PM - CLOSED
(LRP Foundation
11:15 PM - Pay It Forward

HANNIBAL (R-18)
Anthony Hopkins & Julianne Moore
opens Wednesday Feb. 28

Watch out for our 4th issue WOMEN IN CINEMA coming out in March!
Pelikula is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Brad and Julia together

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHO'S the top young actress in Hollywood these days? **Julia Roberts**. Who's her male counterpart? Some film fans would say: **Brad Pitt**. So, how come they haven't made a movie together? They have.

Yes, Julia and Brad are finally topbilling a film, and it's **Gore Verbinski**'s "The Mexican." The two stars have been offered many scripts for their first screen team-up, but nothing excited them until **J. H. Wyman**'s screenplay came their way.

What about its story got their nod? Brad plays a low man on the mob's totem pole who's sent to Mexico to get an old gun that has a curse on it. Julia is his girlfriend and she pressures him to leave the mob. To make sure that Pitt's mission isn't derailed, a hoodlum (**James Gandolfini**) is ordered to kidnap Julia.

The film ends up as a sprightly, sassy road movie with a lot of laughs thrown in for good measure. The two superstars got interested in the project because it provides a welcome breather after the spate of "heavy" movies they've done of late.

The bad news is that the kidnap plot keeps the two stars apart for much of the film. But advance word has it that their chemistry is so strong that the movie remains vital despite their physical estrangement from each other.

The two famous lead players believed in the movie so much that they reduced their huge talent fees so the production could afford them. "The Mexican" also features **Gene Hackman** in a striking cameo role.

TV treats

ON WEDNESDAY, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. on Viva Cinema, **Dina Bonnevie** and **Gary Estrada** star in **Celso Ad. Castillo**'s "Tag-araw, Tag-ulan." **Jenny Roa** and **Suzanne Gonzales** also appear in the film about a woman (Dina) who's trying to recover from a failed love affair and a young man (Gary) on the brink of his first sensual experience.

At 8 p.m. on Star Movies, "The Last Riders" topbills **Erik Estrada** and **Kathrin Lautner**. When a crooked cop is murdered, **Johnny**, (Estrada) a member of the Slavers bikers gang, is forced to leave and start a new life.

The police then convince the Slavers that Johnny has sold them out. When the Slavers kill his wife and child, Johnny goes on the vengeance trail.

At 11 p.m. on Channel [V] Int'l., catch the second part of the rock documentary on the Yes band (replay on March 4 at 9:30 p.m.). The band's hits include "Owner of A Lonely Heart," "Roundabout," "All Good People" and "Heart of the Sunrise."

Feedback

FROM Famar Pangan Santos of Minalin, Pampanga: "I was crestfallen when I learned that The Corrs' concert here has had to be rescheduled due to Andrea's illness. I was looking forward to their performance because I believed that they would be good role models for our own musical artists in upholding our cultural identity, as they have done with the music of Ireland.

"I am praying for Andrea's swift recovery, and I hope that the band will be able to perform here later this year . . ."

Pasado film awards

A GROUP of college professors in Metro Manila belonging to Pasado (Pampelikulang Samahan ng mga Dalubguro) has honored two Star Cinema films with awards.

The films, "Tanging Yaman" and "Anak," have tied for the organization's best picture award. Other trophies from the Pasado Gawad Sining Sine are best actress for **Vilma Santos** ("Anak") and **Gloria Romero** ("Tanging Yaman"); best director and best story for **Laurice Guillen**; best screenplay for Guillen, **Shaira Mella Salvador** and **Raymond Lee**; best cinematography for **Lee Meily**, and best editing for **Ike Jarlego** (all for "Tanging Yaman").

Pasado's members include teachers from De La Salle University, FEU, PWU, Jose Rizal University, College of St. Benilde-DLSU, National Teacher's College, MLQU, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, University of Asia and the Pacific, Mapua Institute, Eulogio Rodriguez Institute and Wesleyan University.

The organization wjll hold its third annual Gawad Sining Sine on Feb. 28 at the FEU Theater in Manila.

Direct-to-home satellite television Dream comes true

IMAGINE watching on television Tiger Woods hitting the fairways of Pebble Beach in the 2001 edition of the US Open, or Arnold Schwarzenneger blasting away the bad guys, or Barbra Streisand hitting the high notes—in the comfort of your seaside cottage in Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte or on a luxury yatch in open seas—with laser-like resolution and CD-quality sound.

A few .years back, this was the stuff dreams were made of. Not anymore.

A local broadcast outfit will soon be offering the first ever Direct-to-Home (DTH) Satellite Television service in the country.

Philippine Multi-Media Systems, Inc. (PMSI) has opened the doors of its multimillion-dollar state-of-the-art facility at the Clark Special Economic Zone to introduce the Dream Broadcasting System to the public.

The programs in digital data format would be compressed through a system provided by Philips and encrypted using the Conditional Access System provided by Nagravision at the head-end facility at Clark.

The signals would then be beamed up by an uplink satellite antenna to four Ku-Band transponders of the Agila II Philippine Satellite, which would then bounce them down to subscribers' homes—all in real time mode.

A Dream subscriber would need a Nokia portable satellite dish antenna to receive the encrypted signals, and a Nokia Integrated Receiver Decoder (IRD), which is smaller than a VHS player, to decode the signals.

Lysis would provide the Automated Traffic Scheduling System and interface software, while Brightpoint Philippines Inc. would handle sales and distribution.

Now how does this compare to existing broadcast technology in the Philippines?

Bycon Benedicto, PMSI vice president for engineering, said that prior to their entry, there were two existing systems.

One was free TV, where anyone with an ordinary TV antenna could capture and view programs broadcast by local TV networks.

The other is cable TV. Cable TV providers obtain programs from other free TV networks and through satellite. These programs are then transmitted to individual subscribers through cable.

"While satellite technology has been used in the past, we are the first in the country to provide direct-to-home satellite television service," Benedicto said. "Aside from the fact that this eliminates the need for cabling from the source to the end user, the superior technology that we use also enables us to provide laser-like images and CD-quality sound to our subscribers."

Dream has organized a highly competent staff to man its one-hectare broadcast center.

The area of coverage of the PMSI satellites includes the Philippines, Vietnam, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Beijing, Shanghai, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Guangzhou and Hainan in Mainland China.

PMSI president Manuel Abellada said the initial subscription to Dream would not be expensive. The monthly subscription, he said, would be quite competitive to current cable subscription rates.

Initially, about 52 video channels and 10 audio channels would be offered by Dream. This would be a mix of musical, movies, documentaries, sports, special interest, news, educational and variety channels.

Pay-per-view channels would also be available.

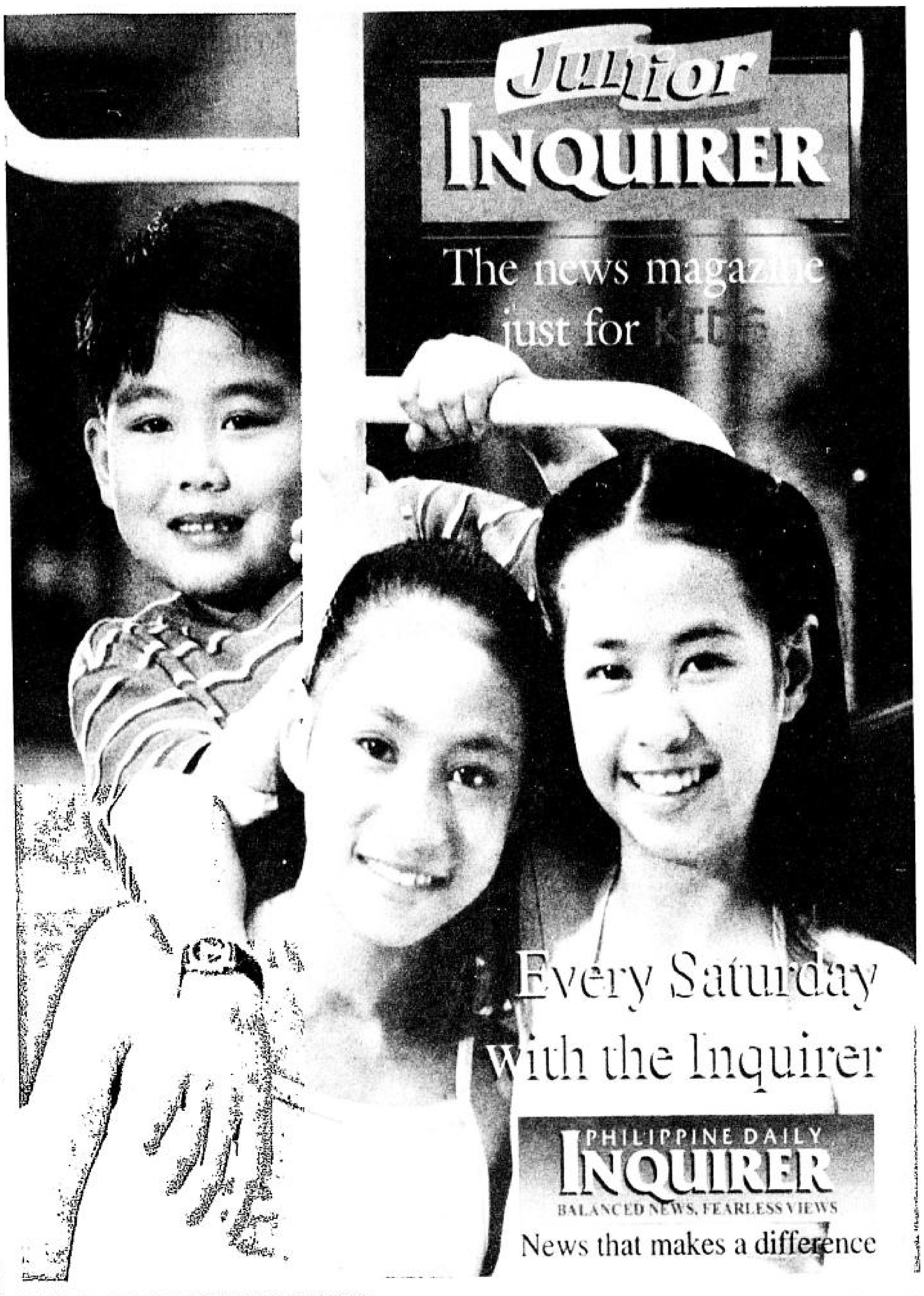
And with the introduction of DTH satellite TV service, Abellada is certain that local TV entertainment as we know it would go on to higher levels.

"This technology would substantially redefine and expand the borders of TV entertainment and this would definitely be good for local TV viewers," he said.

PMSI would also offer convergence technology to its subscribers and provide value-added services such as high speed Internet, home shopping and text messaging.

As part of its social service agenda, PMSI would also open its long distance system for the millions of Filipinos in far-flung areas who do not have access to formal schools.

It won't be long before local viewers can sit back, relax, open their eyes and Dream.



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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND·EX

WOMAN ON TOP - P 13 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00,	CAST AWAY - P 13 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00	PAY IT FORWARD - P 13 11:40, 2:15, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50
THE FAMILY MAN - P 13 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	SNATCH - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	MS. CONGENIALITY - G 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

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SHE'S GOT A KILLER TO CATCH
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11:10 AM / 1:30 PM / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50 LMF
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LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

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Being cruel to the overweight

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

HAVEN'T you noticed our society's obsession with being slim, and as a consequence our tendency to subject overweight people to callous and cruel comments, most often said directly to their faces, with no regard for their feelings?

When you're fat, you're not entitled to be treated in a politically correct manner. All courtesy is thrown out the window, and humiliation is the name of the game.

I have been victimized with the oft-repeated statement uttered to me by complete strangers, be it in church, a shopping mall, or a ladies' room in a restaurant.

For instance, "Wow, **Kris**, slim *ka pala sa personal, bakit sa* TV *ang taba-taba mo?*"

The fact of the matter is, I do fall within the accepted weight for my height, I wear American size 4-6 in pants and dresses, and a small-medium in tops and sweaters. But I gain 10 percent of my body weight on TV, and ideally should be 5-10 pounds underweight to look good on-cam.

Because it is part of my profession to accept as graciously as I can people's comments about my appearance, since I do work in a visual medium, I have learned to smile and say, "In that case I'm glad that they have seen me in person, and I will let my director know that we should work on more flattering camera angles."

I have been on a low-carbohydrate diet for the past three weeks, and have only eaten rice or pasta on just three occasions since embarking on this weight-loss regimen. It's a tremendous sacrifice on my part, and I must acknowledge the fact that I've been extra-sensitive and a bit short-tempered lately because my body has really been craving rice and sugary drinks.

But I'm sticking it out, because I've gotten some encouraging comments about looking slimmer. In this country, losing weight is a lauded achievement, heralded with comments like, "*uyyy, pumayat ka,* blooming *na* blooming *ka, ang ganda mo ngayon, ha.*"

In other words, slimness is equated with beauty.

My cousin **Rina Teopaco-Santos** had a rotten experience courtesy of a security guard at Robinson's Department Store in Robinson's Galleria. She is admittedly overweight, and health-wise would benefit if she lost at least 20 pounds.

The incident occurred on Wednesday, Feb. 21, in the early evening. As she was entering the houseware section entrance of Robinson's Department Store, while munching on a Dunkin Donut choco-frosted donut, the male security guard told her, "Ma'am, *tigilan niyo na ang kakakain niyo dahil ang taba-taba niyo na.*"

First of all, in a service-oriented business such as retail, it really is bad business for an employee to tell a would-be consumer that she's fat just as she is about to enter the store's premises to make several purchases.

Secondly, how insensitive and impolite can a man be to comment to a complete stranger about the unwanted pounds that she's carrying? Did he think that she likes to weigh as much as she does? Wouldn't all women desire to have the body of **Cindy Crawford** or, locally, **Rufa Mae Quinto** or **Donita Rose**, but unfortunately all aren't blessed with their genes and their discipline?

Being overweight, especially in women, is seen as a sign of weakness, and the appearance of *nagpabaya*, or letting one's self go. The desire to get down to a healthy weight won't come from put-downs or humiliating experiences. How can you work at self-improvement if you're self-esteem is being battered mercilessly? And yet, Filipinos do feel that it's their right to comment and criticize directly about the weight of individuals, regardless of how well or how little they know the person.

In a country where so many are struggling to put food on the table, this "pressure" to be the slimmest you can be is really hard to reconcile with.

I accept that part of the reason I do have the job I have now is because of how I look, and it is part of my job's requirements that I take care of my looks, and willingly sacrifice Haagen Dazs banana split, McDonald's french fries, Royal Tru Orange, Maltesers chocolates, buttered popcorn, Seattle's Best white chocolate coffee, and rice with meals, regardless of how "deprived of the good stuff in life" I may feel.

But should people who are just shopping at a mall and who don't earn their living from their appearance be subjected to malicious comments about their weight? And yet it does remain a fact that the sweetest revenge for my cousin Rina is if she did lose her unwanted pounds and went down to her ideal body weight.

Until that time comes, when science will be able to eradicate being obese or just merely overweight, I hope that bashing people who are heavy will be looked upon with as much scorn and censure as people who are racially prejudiced or religiously intolerant. Because unfortunately that's what it should be equated to, a collective mean-spiritedness which as a people I hope we'll be mature enough to outgrow.

Radio promo gives away trip to Amsterdam

TUNE in to Joey@92.3 FM and get the chance to win a memorable vacation for two to postcard-pretty Amsterdam, the Netherlands in the ongoing "Two Lips on Tulips" promotion.

Try your luck while listening to Joey's musical selection of pop jazz, R&B and retro tunes. From Feb. 1 to 28, answer trivia questions on love, Amsterdam, Joey and KLM Dutch Airlines. The first person to fax the correct answer to 882-Joey will be the winner for the day and will automatically qualify for the grand draw on March 6.

All 28 daily qualifiers shall be invited to the grand draw at Italianni's Restaurant, the official restaurant, where a sumptuous spread of Italian-American dishes await them.

The grand prize is transferable but not convertible to cash.

"Two Lips on Tulips" is presented by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and is also brought by Holland Tulips and Italianni's Restaurant.

Short film contest

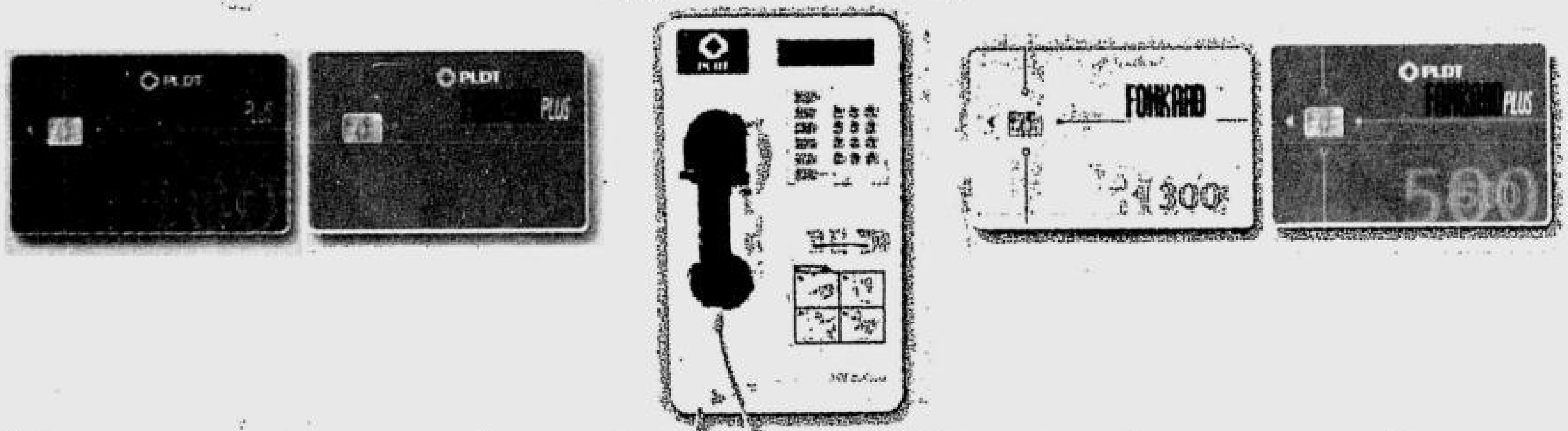
FILMLESS Films, in cooperation with K2 Interactive/seeshorts.com, and Shangri-La Cinema, presents "Silvershorts," a short film competition open to all Filipinos.

All themes, genres and formats are accepted. Each entry must not exceed 20 minutes and should be in a separate VHS tape.

The "Silvershorts" film festival will be held at the Shangri-La Cinema from March 14 to 18, with the awards night on March 17.

Prizes include a full-length film production deal. Submit your original short film/s to Oracafe Multimedia Arts Company Unit E, 2/F Oracafe Compound, 21 Kamias Road, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

For inquiries, log on to www.seeshorts.com or call 928-8323/ 821-8434/ 9218437 or e-mail oracafe@rocketmail.com.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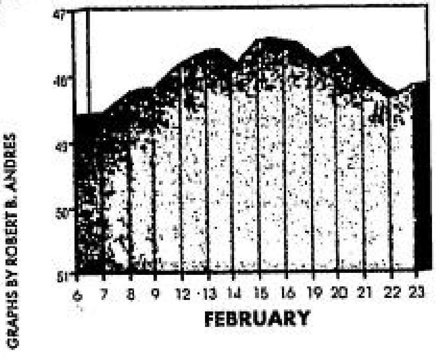

GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

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Feb. 23, 2001

¥116.82/85= $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.82/85 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 23, 2001

GOLD:$259.70/260.20
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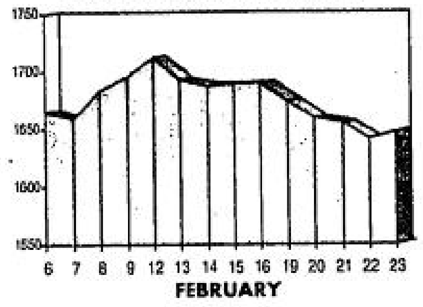
STOCK MARKET

Slow trade seen

LOCAL stocks are seen to drift sideways with a downward bias this week as the "Erap" factor continues to hound the market a month after the president was toppled.

Pineda said that as long as the Supreme Court fails to resolve former President Joseph Estrada's claim that he was a president on leave, uncertainties would remain.

PSE Composite Index



Sy joins redevelopment of San Lazaro racetrack

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy and the owners of the Manila Jockey Club Inc. have agreed to form a joint venture to build a shopping mall complex that will anchor the redevelopment of the 16-hectare San Lazaro hippodrome in Manila.

An INQUIRER source said a memorandum of understanding had been signed early this month by SM Prime Holdings Inc. senior vice president Henry Sy Jr., and MJCI chair Alfonso T. Reyno Jr. for the shopping mall project.

MJCI has allotted four hectares out of the 16-hectare complex for development into a retail center. The company is planning to form a subsidiary to oversee the commercial development of the complex.

SM Prime, with an estimated war chest of nearly P11 billion, is stepping up its aggressive expansion program of building at least two new shopping malls every year in order to firm up its grip on the local retail industry.

The company, which spends P4 billion (from internally generated cash) for mall expansion a year, is set to open a mall in Parañaque and Davao this year.

SM Prime is gearing up for stiffer competition as foreign retail giants such as Wal-Mart and PriceSmart converge in the Philippines with the opening of retail trade to foreign investors.

Sy runs the country's biggest department store chain, biggest supermarket chain, and largest cinema network.

MJCI is expected to continue holding horse races at the San Lazaro racetrack while its owners scout for possible relocation sites on the fringes or outside Metro Manila.

Reyno's group took over MJCI in the mid-1990s with a moist eye on its vast property located in a densely populated area in Manila. But plans to redevelop the property into a leisure estate or memorial park have never gotten off the drawing board as the property sector went bust due to the Asian financial crisis in 1997.

The change in administration last month has apparently given some hope among property developers that a boom could be forthcoming in the next few years.

Last December, MJCI disclosed plans to sell portions of the San Lazaro racetrack property to fast-track the area's development into a mixed-use residential and commercial complex.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, MJCI corporate secretary Ferdinand Domingo said the company was also considering other options to develop the property.

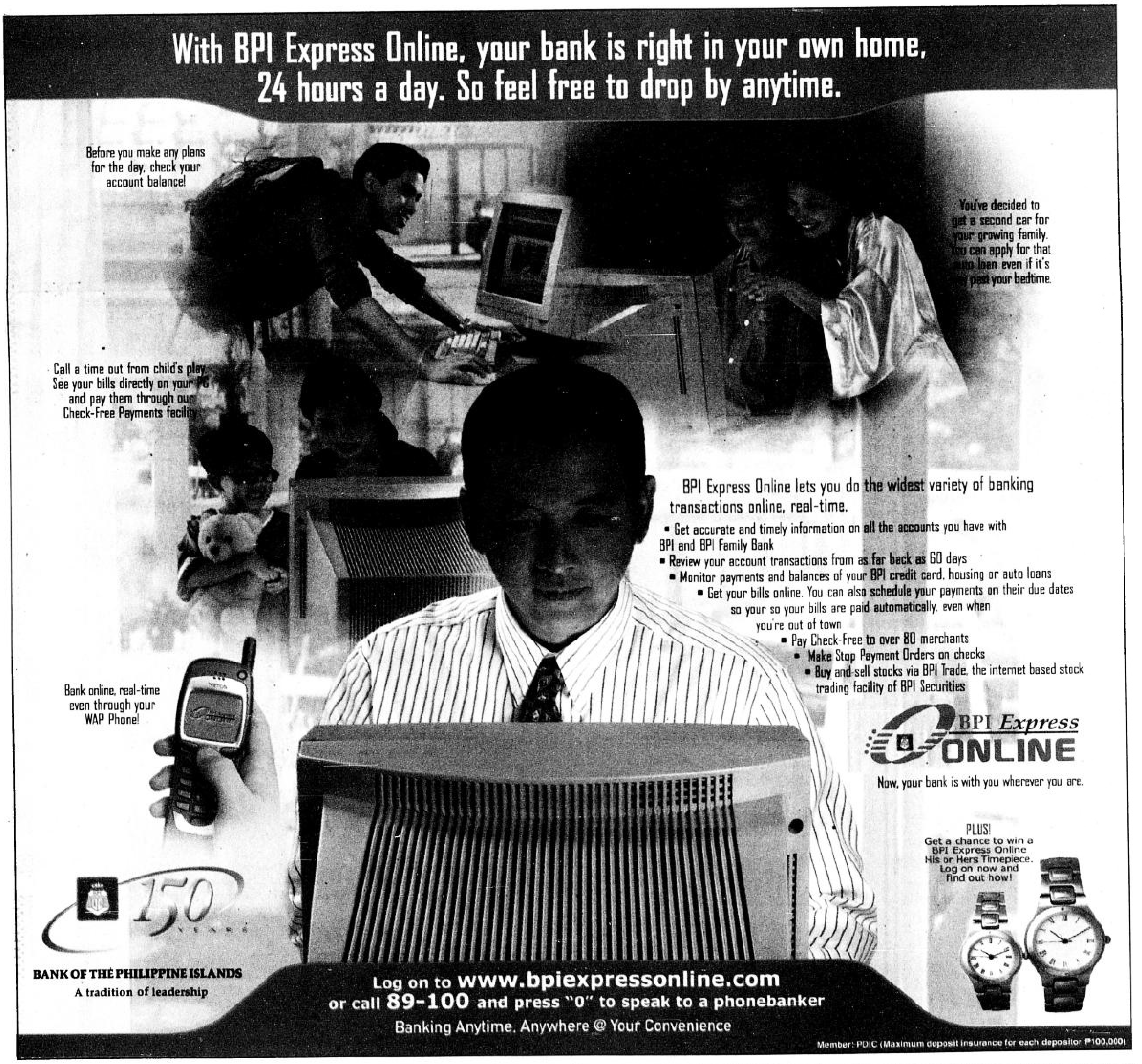
Domingo said the company's board had authorized Reyno to evaluate proposals from interested parties. The original plan was to develop the property on its own but due to the difficult economic environment, MJCI decided to open its doors to possible buyers.

"The action was prompted by the desire of the board to hasten the development of its real estate properties into mixed-use real estate development projects," Domingo said.

Belle Corp.'s Metro Manila Turf Club was among those that had earlier expressed interest on MJCI's racetrack activities. It was proposing a merger with MJCI and Philippine Racing Club Inc.

The Westmont group, which took over the reins of Manila Jockey Club and PRCI a few years ago, wanted to relocate the racetracks outside Metro Manila, most likely in Batangas and Cavite, and redevelop the current sites into mixed-use residential and commercial centers. Lack of funding, however, prevented the group from implementing the plan.

MJCI, which was established in 1937, holds the franchise to hold horse races and develop racetracks at the San Lazaro Hippodrome in Manila, Bulacan and other places authorized by law. It has also opened a number of off-track betting stations throughout Metro Manila to raise total sales. MJCI, however, is now pressed to look for alternative sources of revenues as its earnings from racing activities continue to shrink with rising costs and declining patronage.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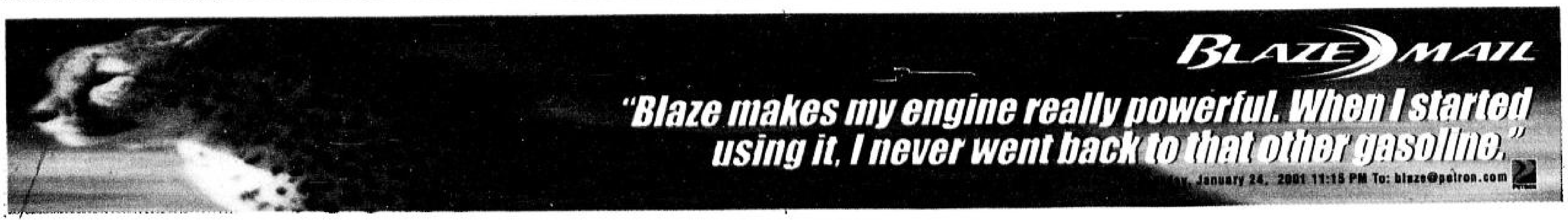
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Retirees in party-list elections - Part 2

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Retired Persons (PARP) is running as a candidate in the party-list elections next May 14 mainly because its friends in the last Congress, although sympathetic, seemed to have been more concerned with other issues.

Planning to win the maximum three seats in the House of Representatives, PARP has drawn up its 8-point legislative agenda.

1. PARP will seek to amend the SSS law so as to align benefits to the current needs of members, especially retirees. PARP holds that the present average monthly pension of P2,640, which is 65 percent below poverty level, is totally unacceptable.

PARP will seek to install safeguards in the SSS law so as to place members' funds beyond the reach of greedy politicians and to use the funds solely for members' benefit.

2. Similarly, PARP will seek to amend the GSIS law to align benefits to the current needs of members, 'especially retirees. PARP holds that, like SSS, the GSIS is owned by the members, who should be the sole beneficiaries.

As in SSS, PARP will seek to install safeguards in the GSIS law to keep its funds away from the clutches of greedy politicians.

3. PARP will seek the total implementation of Philhealth's benefits program to include outpatient services and to expand operations so that the coverage of the indigent sector shall finally take off.

4. PARP will seek to put more teeth in the Senior Citizens' Law to punish more severely and more quickly business establishments who refuse the benefits senior citizens are entitled to. The senior citizen's ID card is not a beggar's bowl.

5. PARP will seek to implement the law, long passed by Congress but never funded, granting additional P700 monthly pension to any veteran who has reached the age of 70. If this law had been implemented upon enactment, it would have placed in the hands of qualified veterans almost P10 billion in pensions.

6. PARP will seek to rationalize existing benefits for overseas Filipino workers, particularly the unregulated self-insurance scheme put up by mere administrative order. Hailed as the new heroes of the land, OFWs have been victimized by their own government.

7. PARP will seek amendments to the Labor Code. For example, it should be illegal for an employer to retire an employee by reason of age.

PARP will also work for cutting probationary employment from six months to one month. This should stop the practice of some employers of placing a new employee on probationary status for six months and terminating his employment before the probationary period expires. Within the first month of employment, the employer should be able to decide whether or not a new employee deserves a permanent appointment.

8. PARP will work for the enactment of a law to rationalize the Armed Forces Retirement Program now managed by the Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS). This should avoid the repetition of the RSBS scandal that ravaged the AFP Retirement Program.

So, if you are a retiree of SSS or GSIS, or if you are about to retire, or even if you are far from retirement,' when you fill up your ballot in the elections on May 14, write out in the slot reserved for the party-list candidate the four-letter word: PARP.

(My email address is 06hydrgen@vasia.com)

ATI earmarks ₱1.2B for capex

PORT operator and logistics provider, Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), said it would invest about P1.2 billion in 2001 to further upgrade its facilities and meet growing demand for its services.

For improved container handling and stacking, it has placed an order valued at $6 million for a new 40-ton ship-to-shore crane and two units of rubber-tired gantry cranes. The equipment will be in operation by the middle of this year.

Last year's capital expenditures amounting to P470 million was spent in the acquisition of new facilities, pier rehabilitation and the expansion of storage areas. A spacious new South Harbor Operations Center building was also put up, integrating the port's administrative and operating units as well as the shipping line branch offices under a single facility.

ATI also said, in a statement, that it posted a net income of P541 million from revenues of P2.93 billion in 2000.

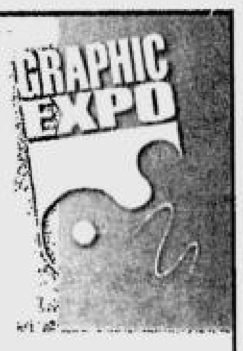
Last year's profit was 29 percent higher than the P418.22 million posted in 1999, while revenues grew 14 percent from the previous P2.56 billion.

The company said that the "difficult business environment tempered an otherwise strong performance last year" as it felt the combined effects of successive fuel price increases, high interest rates and the continuing peso depreciation.

"Despite these pressures, however, the cargo handling business was still fundamentally driven by the growth of world trade as commerce expands and barriers to trade are reduced," the company said.

Full-year volume at South Harbor Container Terminal, the company's flagship business, hit a record 577,412 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), representing a 7.4 percent growth from the 537,439 TEUs handled in 1999. With improvements at South Harbor in full steam, the company's general (non-containerized) cargo terminal is expected to strengthen its existing market share of about 88 percent of Port of Manila volume.

Other ATI-run ports also followed this trend. At the Port of Batangas, operated by ATI subsidiary Aries Arrastre Service Inc., general cargo throughput rose 18 percent last year to 552,269 metric tons from 468,082 MT the year before. Batangas also booked 3,322 containers last year compared to 711 in 1999—its first year of container handling operations.



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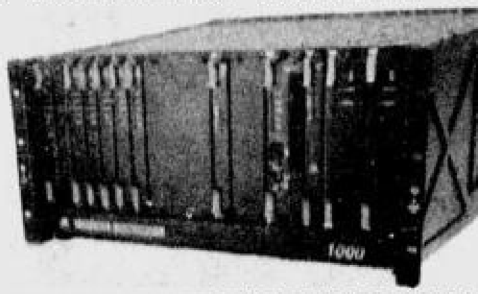

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GMA food

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

DO you know that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo drinks Sustagen in the mornings to make her, to quote from the infant drink's blurb, go and glow, and perhaps still even grow?

GMA described her typical breakfast—"a fortified health drink, like Sustagen or something similar"—and other food preferences in the latest issue of Cook, a monthly glossy published by food critic Nancy Reyes-Lumen but is actually owned by Antonio Cabangon-Chua of dwIZ and the Fortune Group.

"No special diet, but I have good eating habits," GMA answered when asked about her dietary preference.

"Basically, I follow a balanced diet with vegetables and seafood rather than meat. I try to eat meat only on Sundays, but this is not a strict rule."

"Whenever *taho* or a tofu dish is available, I take it," she added.

GMA said she is a "tea and wine" person, and, considering that is from Pampanga, is partial to camaro, burro, hito, and tocino.

Ghost bidder

THERE supposedly were two bidders for Channel 13's dzMZ FM station during the dying days of the Erap administration.

But one bidder, loser Advance Media Broadcasting, is not even registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

A computer check with the SEC last week showed no such corporation in existence.

And yet outgoing PCGG Commissioner Jorge Sarmiento said the award for the FM station, made only two days after Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became president, was aboveboard, since, according to Sarmiento, two parties, the minimum number, turned in their bids.

As advised by Sarmiento, the Committee on

COCKTALES/ B4

This series on Philippine banking history is published in the business section of the **Philippine Daily Inquirer** in commemoration of the 150th year of the **Bank of the Philippine Islands** (BPI), formerly *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2* (The Spanish Filipino Bank of Isabel II), the first bank to be established in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

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...that this branch was opened in spite of the ongoing Philippine revolution against the Spanish colonial government?

...that the bank opted to establish its first branch in Iloilo because of the emergence of this region as a promising sugar central?

...that it was Nicholas Loney (the British vice consul in Iloilo from 1856 to 1869) who was credited for boosting sugar production in Iloilo and the Panay provinces?

...that Loney first arranged for the direct shipment of agricultural products from the port of Iloilo to Australia and Europe, thus providing local traders access to cash transactions at better prices?

150

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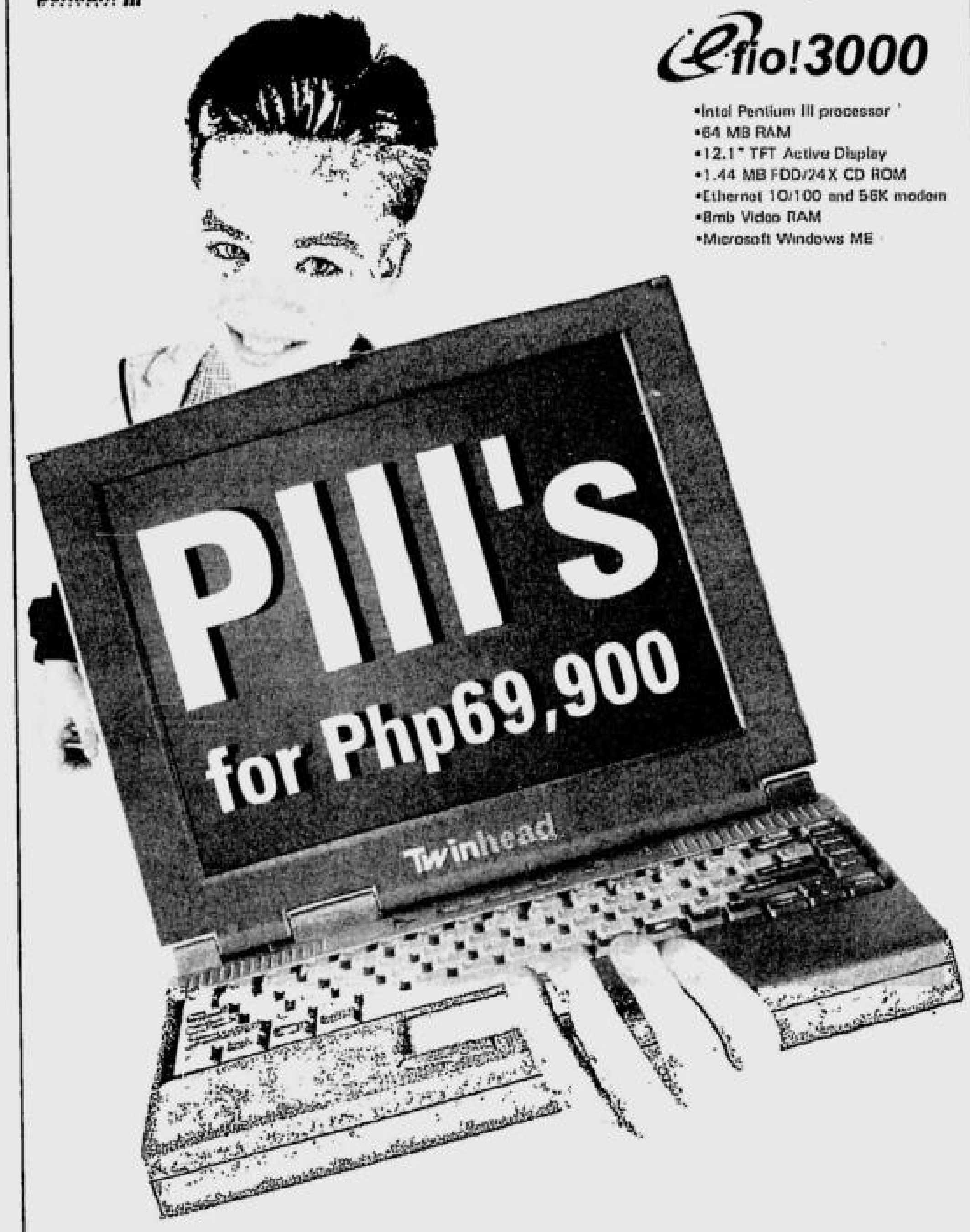

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INQ7.net sees returns in 3 years; no IPO plans yet

By Leo Magno

DESPITE the dotcom slump and the restructuring of Internet companies worldwide, the Internet news delivery company of Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc. sees returns arriving in three years even as it expects no IPO in the near future.

Judith Duavit-Vazquez, chair of the board of INQ7.net, said the lessons learned from the failures of dotcoms will ensure that the company manages its financials prudently.

"Altogether, we expect our ROI within the first three years of operations—at the latest," she said. "The investment of GMA Network in INQ7.net has nothing to do with the dotcom fever."

The online news company expects to do this even as its officials state that an initial public offering is not critical at the moment.

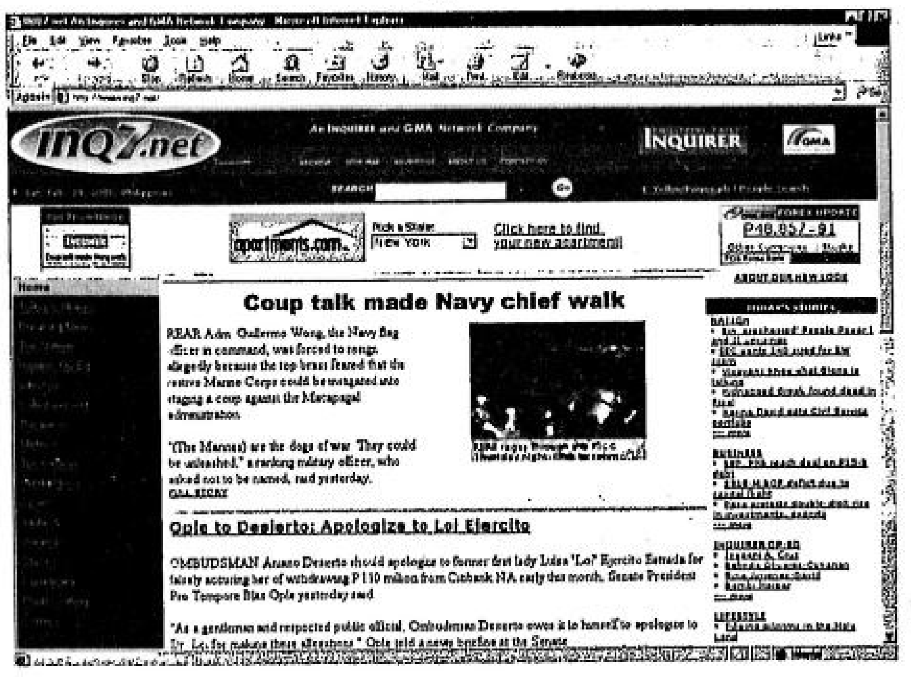
"Most dotcoms think about an IPO at some time in the future," said Dennis Valdes, president and CEO of INQ7.net. "In our case, we will only do so if there is a business necessity for the IPO, such as to raise additional funding for expansion. So I would say that an IPO is not critical for INQ7 at this time."

Without outside funding, both the Inquirer and GMA are pumping in serious money into the website, which will be launched on Feb. 27 at the GMA Network Center with President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

"Both companies are investing a total of over P80 million initially," said Valdes. "Both also realize that because the Internet is so new and continues to evolve, it is impossible to accurately predict how much investment is actually going to be necessary over the next few years.

However, we fully intend to be the leading Filipino news site on the Internet and will make the necessary investments to realize that vision."

In the near future, PDI and GMA are looking at making two rounds of investments for INQ7.net. Duavit-Vazquez said the first lies in the working capital of the company, a figure "in the low hundred millions." The second and more significant, she said, lies "in the brand names and content-producing abilities" of PDI and GMA.



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INQ7.net website

Laura Jimenez-Westfall, board member of INQ7.net, says the dotcom euphoria no longer applies to the PDI-GMA joint venture, which is aimed at competing in the new media arena.

"We are beyond a dotcom play," Jimenez-Westfall said. "We are backed by the two most credible news groups in the country. The INQ7 strategy is the natural progression of moving both GMA Network and the Inquirer from old media to new media."

The INQ7.net officials acknowledge that the website will have to source new streams of revenue if it is to achieve its goals. However, this will not be easy at a time when online advertising expenditure is taking a nosedive. The online advertising market in Asia is facing the same woes that have hit the US, with analysts now predicting that 2001 revenues and earnings will not meet their previous forecasts.

"A number of (revenue) streams are being explored, and will be developed over time. Syndication of online content is one of them. There are many opportunities available to us primarily in coordination with our main shareholders," said Jimenez-Westfall.

"We're also considering some e-commerce partners," added Valdes. "In general, though, front page access will be limited—otherwise, we become just like any other portal."

Other news organizations in the US, however, are taking a different tack. Recently, CNBC.com, the online affiliate of the NBC cable news network, said it would lay off 26 employees, or about a quarter of its staff, as part of a restructuring at the parent company that will reduce overall staff by as much as 10 percent. This move reflects the company's intention to roll the dotcom unit back to broadcasting, a move that is consistent with recent shifts in nearly every other media company. News Corp.'s dotcom units, Fox.com and FoxSports.com, were among the divisions that were folded back into the company's broadcast operations. Similarly, CNN.com now answers to the global news network's broadcast division.

With these developments in mind, would INQ7.net become a dotcom built to flip or built to last?

"I think it's clear that INQ7 is built to last," said Valdes. "We're founded on excellent brick-and-mortar businesses which have no reason to look for a flip."

"We will be here as long as GMA and PDI exist. And that is for decades to come," Duavit-Vazquez added.

Cocktales . . .

(From page B3)

Privatization awarded the FM station to the "other" bidder, Blockbuster Radio, a company controlled by the Louie Vera family.

The award was made despite the Veras being the beneficial owners of five other FM radio stations, apparently in violation of a government prohibition limiting ownership by an entity or an individual to one FM and one AM stations.

PSE fireworks

IT'S that time of the year again when temperature in the trading floor notches a few degrees higher, when handshaking and backslapping seem to be exchanged more than usual, when cocktail parties and intimate dinners are held left and right despite the still sluggish trade volumes.

We are referring to the election for the new board of the Philippine Stock Exchange, the first truncated set under the specter of demutualization.

Instead of the usual 15, the members will only elect seven among them, with the eight other board members being appointed from the outside because of D-day.

Comebacking Harry Liu, a media favorite, is challenging the incumbent Felipe Yap, who boasts of a not-so secret weapon, the unlikely duo of Vivian Yuchengco and Robert Coyiuto Jr. (According to the grapevine, Coyiuto has sent word he will decide on the 11th hour whether he will actually submit his name as candidate.)

Running under Liu are Filomeno Francisco, Omar Cruz, Eric Lim, Paulino Soo, Joseph Roxas, and Edward Co, while Yap has with him, in addition to Yuchengco and Coyiuto, Gregorio Kilayko, David Go, Francis Chua, and Eddie Go Bing.

Short takes

- BESIDES banning his doctor-wife, Milagros, or any relatives from transacting business at the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the new BIR commissioner, Rene Bañez, has placed a maximum value of P2,500 for any gift to be given to any internal revenue officer.

In addition, gift-giving has been limited to special occasions such as "birthday, illness, marriage, Christmas celebrations, birth of a child, etc."

- RAMON Palma-Gil, who is said to be the next president of Pag-Ibig Fund, was found by the Makati Regional Trial Court in 1994 to have fraudulently defrauded creditors and was ordered by Judge Roberto Diokno to pay back P15.3 million plus accumulated interests going back to 1985.

Heard through the grapevine

THE COUNTRY Club, the most exclusive golf course in the country despite its generic name, is seeking financial bailout from the Manila Golf Club.

The club, whose general manager alone reportedly costs members P5 million a year, is in deep hock with Far East Bank, now taken over by Bank of the Philippine Islands.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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DECISION SEEN IN MARCH

2 new groups join Equitable bidding

By Clarissa S. Batino

A LOCAL bank and a European financial institution were among the two new investors that submitted proposals late last week to either merge or infuse new capital into Equitable PCI Bank, a ranking bank official said.

The official said this brought the total number of interested parties in Equitable PCI, once the country's third largest lender, to nine from seven that a committee created by the bank's board will evaluate.

The bank, however, declined to reveal the names of the investors but sources earlier said that among the prospective investors were Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. of taipan Alfonso Yuchengco, JG Summit Holdings Corp. of tycoon John Gokongwei, US-based venture firm Newbridge Capital Inc. and Taiwanese conglomerate Fubon Group.

Possibly in the list were Spain's largest bank, Banco Santander Central Hispano, DBS Bank of Singapore, and Standard Chartered Bank.

Even the World Bank's investment arm—International Finance Corp.—was being eyed to put in tier-two capital, a direct investment plus loan, in the bank.

Equitable PCI president Wilfrido Vergara said the interested investors had shown a preference to invest in either a significant minority or pursue a merger.

"The majority of the proposals favored a strategic investment with management participation," Vergara said.

Vergara said the bank remained very attractive with its customer base of 1.9 million being served by a network of more than 500 branches, 435 automated teller machines, and electronic banking channels.

The bank had asked two financial advisers—JP Morgan Chase and ING Barings—to assist the bank in pre-qualifying and evaluating proposals. The former would review bids for mergers or a majority control, the other for capital infusion or a significant minority stake with management participation.

The merger of Equitable with PCI Bank in May 1999 created the third largest bank in the country with assets of more than P255 billion and deposits of P160 billion before it suffered from heavy withdrawals starting last November.

The bank committee headed by Vergara is expected to come up with a decision on the bidders next month.

Administrator Vitaliano Nañagas of the Social Security System, who sits in the Equitable PCI board, had disclosed that the bank had lost more than P10 billion in withdrawals and had tapped the BSP's liquidity facilities to shore up its finances.

Industry estimates claimed the bank had lost between P30 billion and P40 billion of its P160 billion in deposits after its name was dragged into the "Juetengate" scandal following revelations that former President Estrada maintained secret accounts in the bank.

The bank's former chair, George Go, was a close associate of Estrada's.

The Go family believed the ouster of former President Estrada had lifted the stigma from the bank and for a while, the family was resisting calls to sell.

The Go family owns about 30 percent of Equitable PCI. SSS has 25 percent; GSIS, 12 percent; the Romualdez family, 7 percent, and the rest are spread between Equitable Investments Inc. and the investing public.

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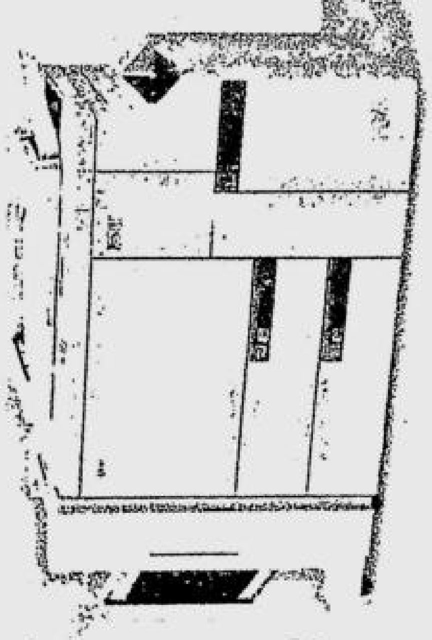

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Lackluster stock trading seen

MARKET PLAY

By DORIS C. DUMLAO

LOCAL stocks are seen to drift sideways with a downward bias this week as the "Erap" factor continues to hound the market a month after the president was toppled by People Power II.

"Where else can you find a country with two presidents?" First Orient Securities head of research Rolando Pineda noted.

Pineda said that for as long as the Supreme Court fails to resolve former President Joseph Estrada's claim that he was a president on leave, uncertainties would continue to keep investors at the edge of their seats.

The ousted president got a 30-day reprieve last week when the high tribunal ruled against the Office of the Ombudsman. Investors were concerned that such a favorable ruling for Estrada would delay efforts to prosecute the ousted leader.

"Foreign brokerage houses have been buying on a gradual basis in previous weeks but now they are selling, and I sense that they are really concerned and are not moving until the SC hands down its decision," Pineda said.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) fell by 42.91 points or 2.54 percent week on week, closing at 1,647 last Friday.

Poor corporate earnings reports during the first quarter, the slump in the international markets, as well as the return of foreign exchange volatility and tightening liquidity are likewise seen to keep the market hostage this week.

"The peso is depreciating again and probably it will depreciate some more. We suspect that dollar demand is increasing as importation is picking up plus there are some seasonal factors at this time of the year," Worldsec International Securities head of research Eric Claudio said.

The peso slid back to the 48:$1 level last week amid the call of President Macapagal-Arroyo for a pro-export exchange rate.

Claudio also noted that the financial crisis in Turkey was dragging down the image of emerging markets.

Summit Securities president Harry Liu said the market would

LACKLUSTER/ B7

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, February 23, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	6.9	7.1	6.9	7.1	4,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	105	105	105	105	740
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69.5	70	69.5	70	214,100
China Banking Corp.	680	680	680	680	3,090
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	56.5	56.5	55	55	88,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	65	69	64	68	4,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	226	230	224	224	61,650
Prudential Bank	500	500	500	500	1,000
Philippine National Bank	36	40	36	40	570,000
Phil. Savings Bank	30	30	30	30	100
Security Bank Corp.	24	24	24	24	4,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	28	28	1,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	340,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1150	1150	1150	1150	3,370
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	17,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	960	965	960	965	20,500
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49	49.5	49	49	8,900
Diversified Fin. Network	10	10	10	10	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	2,940,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	8,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	715	715	715	715	300
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	2,300,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
Piltel	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
Philstar.Com Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	30,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	820	830	820	820	106,980
Ivantage Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	196,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.0725	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	139,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	53.5	53.5	53.5	53.5	2,400
Manila Electric Co. B	62.5	62.5	61.5	62	808,400
Petron Corp.	1.94	1.96	1.94	1.96	1,923,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	842,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.32	1.4	1.32	1.38	2,964,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	10,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.25	0.25	570,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	20,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.87	0.9	0.87	0.9	39,780,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	7,200
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	37	38	37	37.5	221,800
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	31,000
RFM Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	419,000
San Miguel Corp. A	50	50.5	49.5	50.5	83,400
San Miguel Corp. B	59.5	60	59	59.5	257,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	20,000
Ayala Corp.	8	8.1	8	8	2,346,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	11,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.75	12	11.75	12	700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	240,000
APC Group Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	300,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	57,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3	3.05	3	3.05	79,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2	2	1.94	1.94	20,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	600,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.1	3.1	6,899,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.55	0.51	0.55	2,100,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	6,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.48	641,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	85,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,700,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	400,000
Ionics Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	9,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.75	3,168,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	888,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	13,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	1,500,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.92	0.94	0.91	0.94	6,400,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	240,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.63	0.66	0.63	0.66	3,590,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.74	3,500,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	640,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,500,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings-B	1	1.02	1	1.02	80,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	2,000
Music Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	133,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	360,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	2,450,000
Philtread Tire & Rubber A	5	5	5	5	5,000
Philtread Tire & Rubber B	5	5	5	5	6,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.75	13.5	12.75	13.25	978,100
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.64	400,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.66	0.71	0.66	0.69	6,030,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.69	500,000
Manila Jockey Club	17.5	17.5	17	17	8,400
Philippine Racing Club	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	49	49.5	49	49.5	205,100
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	130,000
DMCI Holdings, Inc.- Pref.	505	505	500	500	300
Equitable PCI Bank-War	4.15	4.2	4	4	743,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	92,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	6,943,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	2,200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.43	10,320,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	3,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.9	10,171,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
SM Development Corp.	0.96	0.99	0.96	0.96	460,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	12,922,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	300,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.007	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	28,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	1,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	61,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.1	3.2	3	3.1	67,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	400,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.007	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	106,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	635,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	398,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	5,660,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	10,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	257,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	200,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	710,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	100,000

CURRENCIES

Feb. 23, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.105583	1.000000	48.2340
Japan	Yen	0.009456	0.008553	0.4125
United Kingdom	Pound	1.600663	1.447800	69.8332
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.141745	0.128208	6.1840
Switzerland	Franc	0.652569	0.590249	28.4701
Canada	Dollar	0.718565	0.649942	31.3493
Singapore	Dollar	0.633753	0.573230	27.6492
Australia	Dollar	0.580084	0.524686	25.3077
Bahrain	Dinar	2.932737	2.652661	127.9485
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.294798	0.266645	12.8614
Brunei	Dollar	0.632123	0.571755	27.5780
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000115	0.000104	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025741	0.023283	1.1230
UAE	Dirham	0.301044	0.272294	13.1338
Korea	Won	0.000891	0.000806	0.0389
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.904500	43.6277
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.462464	22.3065
France	Franc	0.152450	0.137890	6.6510
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.410444	19.7974
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.065733	3.1706
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022422	1.0815
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000467	0.0225
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.152126	7.3376
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004512	0.2176
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005436	0.2622
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022422	1.0815
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.148478	55.3957

		PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE
Alabang CC B	Please call	1,700,000.00
Baguio CC	850,000.00	750,000.00
Capitol Hills	120,000.00	115,000.00
Camp John Hay	500,000.00	350,000.00
Canyon Woods	400,000.00	-
Celebrity Sports	Please Call	200,000.00
Eagleridge	Please Call	400,000.00
Filipinas Golf	350,000.00	300,000.00
Fontana C	160,000.00	200,000.00
Fontana D	90,000.00	-
Forest Hills A	Please Call	280,000.00
Malarayat	550,000.00	Please Call
Manila Polo	-	2,700,000.00
Manila Southwoods A	Please Call	850,000.00
Manila Southwoods B	Please Call	900,000.00
Mimosa A	200,000.00	-
Mimosa C2	300,000.00	-
Orchard	350,000.00	290,000.00
Riviera	280,000.00	250,000.00
Subic Golf	310,000.00	-
Subic Yacht Club	450,000.00	Please Call
Tagaytay CC	Please Call	495,000.00
Tagaytay Midlands	900,000.00	Please Call
Tagaytay Highlands	Please Call	1,200,000.00
Tivoli Royale	230,000.00	-
Valley golf	Please Call	330,000.00
Valle Verde	-	175,000.00
Wack-wack	Please Call	7,500,000.00

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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,800,000	1,900,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,900,000	-
Baguio Country Club	800,000	825,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	115,000	150,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	130,000
Camp John Hay	350,000	375,000
Canlubang	850,000	900,000
Canyonwoods	-	400,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	115,000
Cebu Country Club	2,000,000	2,200,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	220,000
City Sports Club Cebu "A"	-	709,500
City Sports Club Cebu "B"	-	764,500
City Sports Club Cebu "C"	-	1,226,500
Club Filipino	300,000	330,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	260,000
Evercrest "A"	-	110,000
Forest Hills "A"	260,000	275,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	290,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	450,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	425,000	450,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	18,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	15,000,000	16,000,000
Manila Polo	Please Call	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	850,000	960,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	950,000	1,000,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	200,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Corp.)	-	55,000
Montemar (Ind.)	-	30,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "B"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	Please Call
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	130,000	150,000
Quezon City Sports Club	230,000	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sta. Elena "A"	1,900,000	
Sta. Elena "B"	2,100,000	2,400,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	-	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	Please Call
Tagaytay Country Club	490,000	530,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,100,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	880,000	910,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	170,000	-
Valley Golf	290,000	360,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	7,700,000	

PLAYING RIGHTS
(Available Lessees)

Manila Golf	450,000

(Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	40,000	Mimosa Golf	20,000
Calatagan "A"	15,000	Orchard "A"	20,000
Canlubang	70,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	30,000	Sta. Elena	70,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	38,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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BUYING:

Alabang A	1,800,000
Alabang B	1,950,000
Baguio Country Club	800,000
Camp John Hay Golf	340,000
Capitol Hills	115,000
Celebrity	205,000
Eagle Ridge A & B	590,000
Manila Golf (Indv.)	15,000,000
Manila Polo	3,150,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	850,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	950,000
Mt. Malarayat "A"	400,000
Orchard "A"	330,000
Orchard "B"	400,000
Sta. Elena A	2,000,000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	1,200,000
Valley Golf	350,000
Wack Wack	8,600,000

SELLING

Eagle Ridge A & B	690,000
Forest Hill "A"	260,000
Forest Hill "B"	260,000
Manila Golf (Cor.)	16,000,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	900,000
Orchard "C"	600,000
Riviera "B"	350,000
Sta. Elena A	2,100,000
Sta. Elena B	2,380,000
Tagaytay Midlands	910,000
Tagaytay Highland Club	500,000

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PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "B"	1,850,000	-
Baguio Country Club	750,000	-
Camp John Hay	-	360,000
Canyon Woods	-	400,000
Capitol Hills	-	150,000
Club Filipino "C"	-	Please Call
Eagleridge "A"	400,000	-
Eagleridge "B"	600,000	-
Evercrest golf club	-	150,000
Fontana "D"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	450,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	-
Makati Sports Club, Inc.	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Indv.)	14,500,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	850,000	900,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	950,000	-
Mimosa Golf & Country Club	-	200,000
Orchard Golf "A"	300,000	-
Riviera "C"	-	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay	Please Call	115,000
Sherwoods "B"	-	390,000
Sta. Elena	1,850,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht Club	-	450,000
Subic Golf Yacht Club	-	200,000
Tagaytay Country Club	490,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	1,200,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	-	950,000
Valle Verde	180,000	-
Valley Golf	350,000	400,000
Wack-Wack	-	Best Bid

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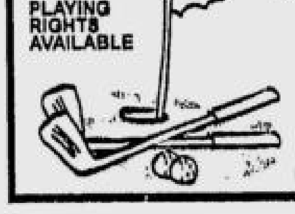
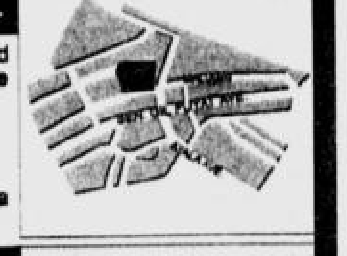


FPDsavills

PROPERTIES FOR SALE OR LONG TERM LEASE

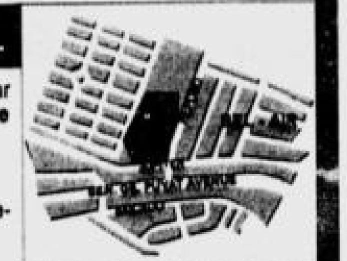
Malugay Property 8,056 sq.m.

The land is strategically located within close proximity to Ayala Avenue and Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue intersection. Based on preliminary studies, we believe the site to be ideally suitable for:
Business hotel and serviced apartments
Residential condominium
Office - Grade 'B'
Improvements on the property include five semi-concrete buildings with a gross floor area of 4,182 sq.m. No height restrictions applicable.



Jupiter Exchange 35,037 sq.m.

The property comprises a large site of about 3.5 hectares well located near the financial, residential and entertainment districts of Makati. We believe the site is ideally suitable for:
Retail establishments
Office - Grade 'B'
Improvements on the property include a 2-level semi-concrete office-warehouse/shop bordered by a concrete fence.
With current Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 5



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		SELLING	BUYING
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"		1,600,000
2	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"		1,700,000
3	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB		750,000
4.	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150,000	100,000
5.	CAMP JOHN HAY	400,000	320,000
6.	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		850,000
7	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	130,000	120,000
8	CELEBRITY CLUB	220,000	200,000
9	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS		490,000
10.	CLUB FILIPINO	340,000	320,000
11.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250,000	220,000
12	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"		400,000
13.	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
14	FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls Call	Pls Call
15.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300,000	260,000
16.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	550,000	
17.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	
18.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	450,000	400,000
19.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	500,000	
20	MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	15,500,000	
21.	MANILA POLO CLUB		2,600,000
22	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	1,000,000	900,000
23	MANILA YACHT CLUB	650,000	
24	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	190,000	170,000
25.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200,000	
26	MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND)	500,000	400,000
27.	MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (CORP)	900,000	
28	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls Call	280,000
29	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls Call	Pls Call
30.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls Call	Pls. Call
31	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	250,000	
32	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	290,000	
33	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	500,000
34	ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls Call	Pls Call
35.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	Pls Call	1,700,000
36.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	500,000	
37.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (CORP)	800,000	
38	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		1,100,000
39	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	950,000	
40.	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB		175,000
41.	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	400,000	350,000
42	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		7,500,000

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One month later

ON THE MONEY

John Mangun

THE MARKET closed Friday, after a dull and boring week, virtually unchanged from the end of February 2000. The trading is what I expected to happen when I said a couple of weeks ago that the likely scenario would be that the market would be caught in a narrow range until around the middle of March. My guru Franky (who also uses Kama Sutra exercises with his technical analysis) is starting to call for a downward bias, but I am not so pessimistic. As long as we hold the 1570 to 1620 area on the Phisix, the chart pattern stays intact for a move upward.

If we assume for a moment that technical analysis reflects the psychology of the market, then this period of quiet movement is normal for two reasons.

First, it is taking a little time to digest the potential reversal that occurred after January 20th. You cannot stop going in one direction and immediately progress in another without a pause to turn the corner. In fact, this hiatus gives me more reason to believe that a bull market is coming. And if external factors are reflected in the trading of stocks, then we are also digesting the political changes that happened last month.

The second reason is that at turning points of the market, there is tendency for those holding losing positions to wait and hope their stocks recover. Even with the run-up since January, most longer term positions are at a loss. Instead of placing new money into stocks, existing holders are waiting to see if they can recover some losses. That is unlikely to happen. At some point in the future, these people will become discouraged and begin to, perhaps, shift into other issues. We need to see some selling before we can take off. I do not expect to see strongly down days. What I expect to see are days where individual stocks fall and then go back up before the end of that day's trading. A rally will not start until new money comes into the market and that new money will not come in until stock prices start going up. Somewhat confusing isn't it?

Actually, it does make sense. Two opposing camps of people who are "waiting and seeing" exist. "Sellers" do not want to sell losing positions, waiting to see if they will go back up. "Buyers" are waiting and seeing if prices might fall a bit more before coming in. Soon one of these two psychological groups will get tired of waiting and will make a move. If the "sellers" go first, then the "buyers" will rally prices because their expectations have been met and they can buy at slightly lower prices. If the "buyers" move first, then the "sellers" will take advantage of any gains on their losing positions to get out of the losers and shift into fresh issues that they think will move up with a rally.

The timing on this breakthrough, I believe, rests on the movement of interest rates. There is still plenty of cash in the economic system but rates are too high to encourage a movement out of banks and into the stock market. The Bangko Sentral is hesitating to lower lending rates but I think this is more political than economic. The Arroyo administration has made no definite commitment as to what its economic plans are for the rest of the year, which is unfortunate. The whole country is waiting to hear some words of inspiration if not wisdom on the economy, and there is a seeming silence. So far, the stock market is sending its own judgment of the President's performance. The market is mildly optimistic. Once the President makes her economic ideas clear, then the BSP can plan ahead on what the monetary needs of the government will be and make some changes in interest rates. For now, we will continue to see a slight reduction in treasury bill rates, but the key overnight lending rates will stay static and that is not positive for the market. Until the BSP lowers the overnight rates, we are stuck.

In the meantime, if you are a long-term investor, this is annual meeting season. Watch and listen for those companies that are enthusiastic about the future and are willing to spend money to make money. The companies that will outperform the economy will still be those that take a proactive role in their future and do not sit on the sideline waiting for things to happen. The first company that comes forward with an aggressive capital spending plan as I mentioned last week will move to the top of my long term picks in this stock market. We supposedly have the "political solution" that business wanted. Now let's see who is willing today to put their money where their mouths were over the last few months.

I felt like a father confessor this past week. From finance major Christine to OCW Raul, many people wanted to talk about the stock market. I am surprised that a little optimism about the future brings people to take a second look at the stock market. One comment came from a lady named Ophelia. She talked about the money she profited during the early 1990s only to see substantial losses over the last few years. She confessed that she got into the market "without really knowing the mechanics." As I believe that we may be on the edge of great profit opportunities, I caution you to learn everything you can about the market and how to buy stocks in order to take advantage of the situation. I do not believe that this will be as easy a time to make money as the 1993-1995 time was. Investing in the market is a business and not a fling at the casino. If you know what you are doing and what to watch for, you can be a winner. Again, (and again) watch interest rates for the big picture. For individual companies, watch for some creative thinking.

I thank all of you who expressed interest in getting my analysis by e-mail. I guess I should have said that I will not be charging anything for the time being. If you want to be on "The List," contact me at the address below.

(John Mangun can be reached at Tel. 636-1121/35, Fax at Number 634-2349 or e-mail at johnmangun@yahoo.com.)

Lackluster stock trading seen

(From page B6)

likely move sideways this week, with the next technical support at 1,600 to 1,650 and resistance at 1,770.

"There will be buy and hold opportunities for every dip. Should the market break 1,720 there will be volatility. The medium-term target is still 2,100," Liu said.

Pineda, for his part, said: "It seems that there is support at 1,650. If it holds, the market will be trading between 1,650 and 1,670 assuming nothing will happen. If it breaks out below, then the market will move between 1,620 and 1,650."

Also aggravating the local market's woes was the drop of most markets abroad specially the technology-heavy Nasdaq, which reached a new 25-month low.

Claudio also noted that jitters over the banking sector, which takes up a big portion of the local market's assets, have not helped improve market sentiment.

"All of a sudden you have three banks up for sale, Philippine National Bank, Urban Bank and Equitable PCI Bank," he said.

PNB gained some momentum last Friday on news that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved a rehabilitation plan involving the restructuring of its P15 billion in loans and the opening of a new liquidity window. Tobacco magnate Lucio Tan, who controls the bank, has said he was willing to jointly sell his stake in the bank with the government.

On the other hand, the financial advisers of Equitable PCI Bank—JP Morgan Chase and ING Barings—have started to evaluate all bids from interested investors after last Monday's deadline.

Meanwhile, the government is scouting for a new white knight for Urban Bank, which has been shut by the BSP due to insolvency last year, after Bank of Commerce withdrew its offer.

In the telecom sector, Claudio said the flagging earnings of mobile phone provider Pilipino Telephone Corp. might affect telecom giant Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co., the bellwether of Philippine stocks.

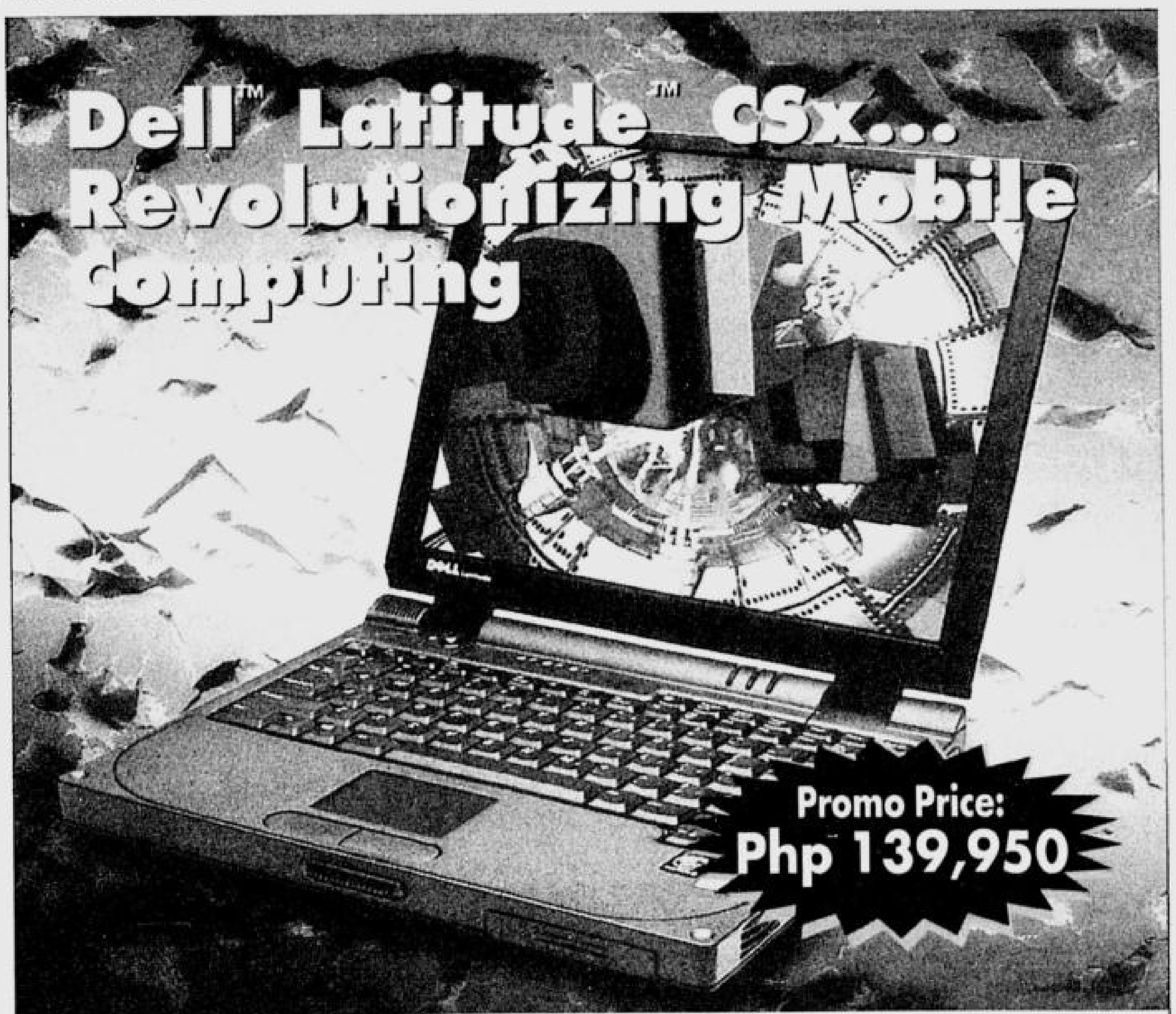
On stock picks for this week, Liu said it might be worthwhile to monitor the following blue chips: Meralco, San Miguel Corp., La Tondeña Distillers Inc., Jollibee warrants, ABS CBN preferred, Ionics Circuits Inc., PLDT, and First Philippine Holdings.

He said the following stocks, on the other hand, were expected to be volatile on the back of thin volume: SPI Technologies, Solid Group Inc., International Container Terminal Services Inc., Philweb.com and RFM Corp.

In the case of Meralco, however, questions over the computation of its return on rate base (RORB) are still seen to continue weighing down on its share prices.

"With the succession of bad news recently, earlier hopes of anything positive happening soon have slowly diminished. Worries remain that, despite the establishment of a new government, the economy won't recover as quickly as some had hoped and the earnings picture will remain cloudy," Philstocks.net said.

"The Phisix breached its main support of 1,650 last week. This opens the possibility of testing the 1,600 levels in the days to come. This may or may not be the bottom, but we are getting near the point where it's attractive to buy stocks. From a fundamental standpoint, the economy is starting to stabilize but a full recovery is not yet materializing. In other words, the country's near-term fundamentals are poor but promising," it said.



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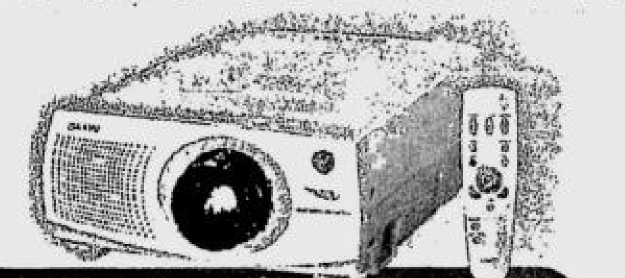

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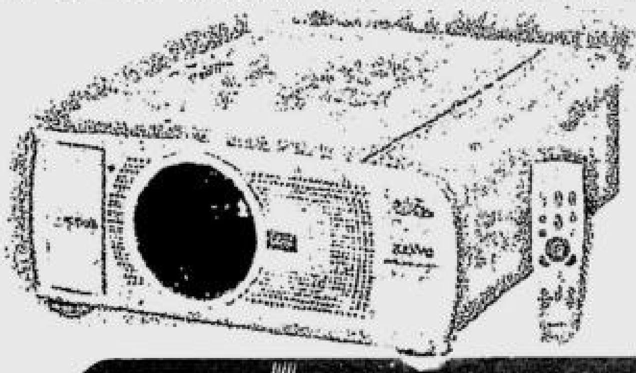

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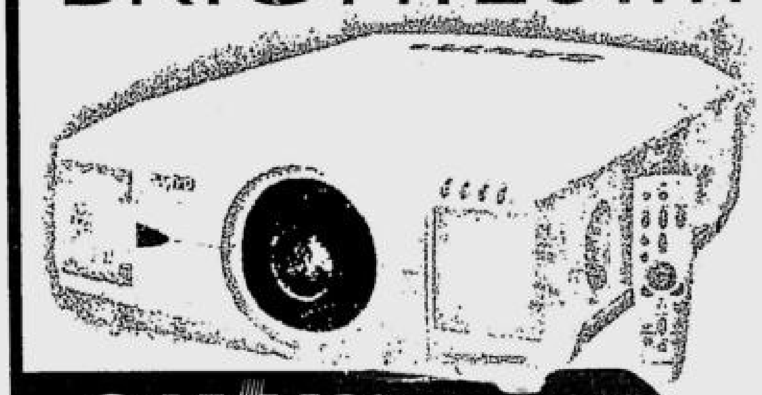

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BROADCAST VENTURE

PLDT to buy DTH video firm

By Anthony O. Alcantara

THE GROUP of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is considering the possibility of acquiring a direct-to-home video company in order to strengthen its broadcasting venture.

An industry source said the PLDT group was considering four DTH video companies for possible acquisition. These are Philippine Multimedia Systems Inc. of Antonio Cojuangco and Jaime Dichaves; H. Thomas Telesis of Thomas H. Navasero; Pacific Cable and DTU Systems Inc., and Altimax of Mel Velarde and JV Ejercito.

PLDT president Manuel Pangilinan refused to give details on the company's plans but admitted that the PLDT group had already held talks with PMSI and H. Thomas Telesis earlier. As for Altimax, he said the company was the one that approached PLDT after it acquired a license in December last year.

Pangilinan said some DTH companies have approached the group and made their offers thinking that PLDT might need to buy a company with an existing DTH license.

"We were hoping to launch a DTH business before the elections. However, we haven't decided yet if we will acquire an existing DTH company or apply for a license ourselves. It may also be a joint venture with a company with an existing license," Pangilinan said.

DTH is essentially a video and data service using satellite technology. It is an alternative to the traditional coaxial cable used by cable television, and it uses setup boxes and small satellite dishes to make the system work.

Pangilinan said this technology would preclude the use of expensive cables and allow the PLDT group to have immediate nationwide coverage that could reach even the remotest barrios.

The PLDT group is now studying how to come up with a pricing scheme that will be competitive with traditional cable TV services as well as the high speed Internet access via cable.

"There are many possibilities with DTH technology. As a teaching device, for example, it is a very powerful tool. Distance learning is only one of its uses. The technology's reach can be broad and it can be specific," he said.

Because PLDT is not allowed to go into the broadcast business, the company would have to course its acquisition through one of its subsidiaries again. Upon securing the license, PLDT subsidiary Mabuhay Philippines Satellite Corp. and Echostar Direct TV may have to form a joint venture for the new DTH service.

While Mabuhay can provide the satellite transponders, Echostar will likely provide the content.

At present, Mabuhay's Agila 2 satellite still has unused Ku band transponders that is suitable for DTH transmission.

Last Feb. 7, Mediaquest Holdings Inc., a subsidiary of PLDT's beneficial trust fund, signed a memorandum of understanding for the acquisition of a majority stake in GMA Network Inc. for approximately P8.5 billion.

SEC says Urbancorp facing liquidation

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission will be forced to order the liquidation of Urbancorp Investments Inc., a subsidiary of the failed Urban Bank Inc., if no feasible alternative to rehabilitate the group was presented by March 8.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista made the statement following the breakdown of talks for the rehabilitation of UII and Urban Bank through a merger with Bank of Commerce.

UII last June asked for and was granted relief on its P5.83 billion in liabilities.

The state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., the receiver of Urban Bank, has claims amounting to P4.6 billion from UII on behalf of the bank.

Bank of Commerce recently backed out from a plan to merger with Urban Bank and UII in view of several unresolved legal issues.

PDIC president Norberto Nazareno said a rebidding of the failed bank might be held since several banks have been informally inquiring about the status of Urban Bank.

He said the big depositors as well as the smaller ones "could band together and opt to reopen Urban Bank."

Petron Corp. and San Miguel Corp. have P1 billion each in deposits in Urban Bank while Manila Electric Co. has P500 million.

Before Urban Bank was closed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas last April, the government was urging Banco de Oro of the SM group and Asia United Bank of the family of Jacinto Ng to explore options to rehabilitate Urban Bank.

Nazareno said another option was to liquidate the bank but this, he said, was unpalatable.

"Liquidation takes time and this is an unpopular option," Nazareno said.

Cyber Bay seeks relief on $23-M loan

By Doris C. Dumlao

CYBER Bay Corp. and its subsidiary, Amari Coastal Bay Development Corp., are negotiating for the restructuring of a $23-million (P1.3 billion) loan from Bangkok Bank Public Co. Ltd.

The loan, which was tapped to finance the initial phase of the 750-hectare reclamation project along Manila Bay, was declared in default in October 1998 and is now subject to a penalty of 3 percent per year.

The agreement covering the loan from Bangkok Bank prohibits the pledging of Amari's assets to other creditors; the company's liquidation, consolidation, reorganization or a merger with another person or group, and the sale, leasing, mortgaging or disposition of its assets.

The loan carried interest charges at prevailing Singapore Interbank Offered Rate plus 2.5 percent. It was guaranteed by the company's stockholders.

The Amari project, which grabbed the limelight at the height of the PEA (Public Estates Authority)-Amari bribery scandal two years ago, is the centerpiece of the Coastal Bay waterfront development. It is expected to attract fresh investments of at least P200 billion into the Philippines.

CBC, which used to be known as Centennial City Inc., and Amari were able to obtain loans from Bangkok Bank because the majority stake of the project used to be controlled by the Ital-Thai group.

Ital-Thai Development Corp. Ltd. is the largest infrastructure construction company in Thailand and one of the biggest civil engineering contractors in Southeast Asia. Its local subsidiary, Ital-Thai International, was contracted to develop the reclamation area during the administration of President Ramos.

But the Estrada administration felt that the government did not get a good deal out of the PEA-Amari project and ordered a renegotiation of the contract. This paved the way for the entry into the project of a new group led by Ramon Ang, known as the right-hand man of Danding Cojuangco, and led to the dilution of the Ital-Thai group's stake from 70 percent to 30 percent.

Subic Freeport lures new investors

By Jerry Esplanada

SUBIC'S port and industrial hub

"IT'S business as usual at the Subic Freeport and business is definitely doing well here."

Felicito Payumo, chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), also disclosed that as far as industrial development at the freeport is concerned, "everyone's even more optimistic under the new dispensation."

The good news, Payumo told the Inquirer, was that "foreign investors who knocked on our door before the political turmoil and committed to do business here did not back out. They could have backed out because of the crisis but they did not. In fact, they have broken ground."

"Now that the crisis is over, a number of investors, foreign and local, have started knocking on our door again. Business is definitely thriving in Subic as shown by the increasing number of foreign direct investments coming into the freeport," said the former Bataan legislator and Liberal Party stalwart.

New locators

Among the new SBMA locators are the Japanese firms Sankyo Seiki Manufacturing Co., Sanyo Denki (Phils.) Inc. and Juken Sangyo (Phils.) Corp. which have committed investments of $100 million, $21 million and $20 million, respectively.

Sankyo Seiki, one of the biggest publicly listed companies in Japan, is engaged in the production of, among others, micromotors for hard disk drives. It will begin operations by October.

Occupying more than five hectares of the Japanese industrial park, Sankyo Seiki's manufacturing plant is the second biggest at the freeport, second only to Acer Philippines Inc.

Sanyo Denki, which manufactures microfans for computers, has a global distribution network. Its Subic plant is its first production facility outside Japan.

Juken Sangyo is engaged in the production of plywood, laminated veneer lumber and laminated lumber for households and offices. At the peak of its operations, the company is expected to export up to 750 containers of finished products a month.

Getting busier

"The Subic port will definitely get busy," said a bullish Payumo.

Other new locators include Aparri Electronics Corp. with $6 million in additional investments in electronic products: Yi-Phone Subic Bay Corp. which committed an additional $3.13 million in machinery investments; Catcher Technology Phils. Inc., the main supplier of notebook parts for Acer Philippines; and Comoss Electronics (Phils.) Corp. which has just completed a new manufacturing facility at Phase I of the Subic Bay Industrial Park.

"The list of locators is getting longer," Payumo disclosed. "While others speculate that investors are putting on hold their business plans in the country, what is actually happening here is contrary to that bleak picture."

Earlier, Federal Express, which is based at the Subic International Airport, extended its lease contract (which is set to expire next year) to 2007 with an option to extend it further to 2013.

Also expanding their operations are BICC Brand Rex with $20 million in additional investments, Koryo Subic Inc. ($3 million) and Active Alliance Inc. ($2 million).

In December, the freeport's cumulative investments totaled $3.08 billion.

Export earner

Exports amounted to $1.18 billion during the 12-month period, an increase of 9 percent over 1999 figures of $1.08 billion and 113 percent higher than $545 million in 1998.

The 2000 figures "downplayed claims by some sectors that the Philippines' total export performance has suffered severely due to last year's political crisis," the SBMA chair noted.

The trade industry lists Subic as the country's third largest export revenue earner. Last year, it contributed more than 16 percent to the nation's aggregate export value next only to Metro Manila (39 percent) and Baguio (28 percent).

Since Payumo's takeover in September 1998, the SBMA has registered $2.49 billion in total exports, which represent 64 percent of the freeport's cumulative export receipts of $3.88 billion.

Last year, the SBMA reported a net income of P105.1 million, an improvement over 1999 losses amounting to P105.6 million.

"Another good news," according to Payumo, is the hiring of 6,000 additional workers at the freeport this year.

"About 5,000 of these workers will be hired by Japanese companies," he said. In mid-1998, only 7,756 workers were employed at the former US naval facility.

Last year, the SBMA Labor Center facilitated the employment of nearly 14,000 workers, bringing to 34,372 the total number of workers employed by locators and the freeport. "This far exceeds the employment level of 30,000 during the time of the Americans," Payumo pointed out.

Meanwhile, modernization of the Subic port continues. In a statement, the SBMA said Subic Bay is "gradually emerging as the world's economic and transport gateway to Asia, given its well-sheltered natural deep harbor and its strategic location across the major international shipping routes."

When interviewed, Payumo said a 16.45-billion yen loan package from the Japanese government (through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation) will bankroll the Subic port development project.

The $215-million scheme calls for the development of a new container terminal at the Cubi Point area, "one capable of accommodating Panamax and post-Panamax vessels and the rehabilitation of existing port facilities at the Naval Supply Depot and Boton areas."

It will also "increase container port capacity to 900,000 TEUs a year (compared to Hong Kong and Singapore which handle 14 million TEUs each)."

Payumo said port development will compliment the 92-kilometer, four-lane Subic-Clark-Tarlac road project, estimated to cost $425 million.

"One project will not succeed without the other. Both projects are expected to jumpstart the development of Central Luzon, obviously left behind by the Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon (Calabarzon) development," he said.

The SBMA leadership also plans to make the freeport an information technology center. Pacific Technology International has signed an agreement with SBMA for the establishment of an advanced communications center in Subic.

Partnerships were also forged by the SBMA with Silicon Valley in California and the Alliance Center in Texas.

Payumo's other vision is to "open Subic's horizon toward Central Luzon. Subic should not be an enclave."

As the flagship of economic zones here, he stressed that the freeport's "vision must soar, its geography must not be confined."

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PAL warns gov't against naming unfit flag carrier

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PHILIPPINE Airlines said it would not block plans to designate a second flag carrier but it urged the government to ensure that a rival airline would have the technical and financial resources to fly international routes.

PAL president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta said PAL would not oppose the government if it should decide to adopt a proposal by the Economic Mobilization Group to name taipan John Gokongwei's Cebu Air. Inc. as the country's second official carrier.

Zapanta, however, cautioned the government against naming an unqualified airline just for the sake of breaking PAL's decades-long monopoly of international routes.

He cited the case of Grand Air of the Panlilio family which was allowed to compete with PAL in the mid-1990s. The EMG noted that Grand Air never operated the international routes it obtained from the government and it made its last flight more than two years ago. It ordered a recall of Grand Air's designation as official carrier for Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea.

Zapanta said operating an international carrier was very different from running a domestic airline. "An international airline requires more financial resources and technical capacity than a domestic airline," Zapanta said.

He said an airline should have a young fleet of wide-bodied airplanes as well as world-class pilots and mechanics for maintenance in order to earn flag carrier status.

EMG wanted a second flag carrier to fill up the unserved markets of PAL which used up only 30 percent of its 5.7 million seat entitlements to other countries with PAL's capacity utilization ranging from 46 percent for Singapore to 92 percent for South Korea. It named Cebu Air as being in the best position among local carriers to expand overseas.

Cebu Air is second only to PAL in the domestic market as it captured 30 percent of the business through lower fares and better service. Gokongwei has announced plans to spend P19 billion for Cebu Air's refleeting program to acquire 14 new aircraft to replace its current line of 12 DC-9's which would be used purely for cargo operations.

NEW EJAP OFFICERS

The new officers of the Economic Journalists Association of the Philippines for 2001 were recently inducted by former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara (right most). From right are new Ejap president Cris Larano of AP Dow Jones; VP internal Jun Ebias of Bloomberg; VP external Vic Lopez of Malaya; Pearl O. Bantilio of Malaya, secretary; Lawrence Agcaoili of Today, treasurer and Eileen Mencias of Manila Standard, auditor. Elected as directors are Gil Cabacungan Jr. of the Inquirer, Honey M. Reyes of Manila Times, Maricis Carlos of Businessworld, Ted Torres of Philippine Star and Salve Duplito of Businessworld (not in photo).

San Miguel to spin off Sugarland unit

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. is planning to spin off Sugarland Beverage Corp. and give it its non-alcoholic beverage business.

Well-placed industry sources said San Miguel was considering transferring all non-alcoholic beverage products being marketed by La Tondeña Distillers Inc. to Sugarland, which had already been renamed for this purpose.

Sugarland, a powdered juice and water gel manufacturer, was originally known as Sugarland Multifoods Corp. before it was acquired by San Miguel and folded into La Tondeña last year.

But sources said San Miguel wanted to build up Sugarland as a separate beverage company where a minority stake would be offered to The Coca-Cola Co.

Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc., which would be jointly acquired by San Miguel and Coke from Coca-Cola Amatil Ltd. of Australia, would not necessarily be folded into Sugarland, according to persons familiar with the matter.

One reason why Coke backed up San Miguel's bid to regain control of Coca-Cola Philippines—aside from its disappointment with Coca-Cola Amatil's handling of its Philippine business—was its plan to embark on a non-carbonated beverage business in the Philippines through a strategic partnership with san Miguel.

The emerging plan was for San Miguel to control 60 percent to 65 percent of the spun-off Sugarland while 30 percent to 35 percent would be offered to Coke. Analysts said the plan would serve as a litmus test to the synergy between san Miguel and Coke in handling the beverage business for bigger ventures ahead.

Coke is also keen on acquiring a minority stake in La Tondeña. In case Coca-Cola Philippines is folded into La Tondeña, Coke's 35-percent stake may be converted into a minority stake in La Tondeña.

Analysts are expecting that all juice and bottled water businesses under San Miguel group will be spun off into a separate subsidiary.

DOF issues warning vs nepotism

By Elena R. Torrijos

FINANCE Secretary Alberto Romulo and Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Lilia Bautista have issued separate orders reiterating the government's policy against nepotism.

The two officials barred employees of the Department of Finance and the SEC from dealing directly or indirectly with the relatives of officers assigned to these agencies.

Romulo warned DOF employees against transacting with any of his real or claimed relatives, including his wife, Lovely Tecson Romulo, especially on matters relating to government contracts and appointments.

Romulo said the order was without prejudice to Section 5 of Republic Act 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, as well as other similar and relevant laws.

"Any officer or employee of the government, including those of the corporations owned or controlled by the same, violating this order shall be dealt with accordingly," Romulo warned.

In a separate order, Bautista reminded all SEC employees that they should perform their duties with the highest degree of professionalism without discriminating against or in favor of anyone.

"They are hereby enjoined to avoid red tape and act on pending matters with reasonable dispatch. More importantly, they shall not extend undue favors or advantage on account of their office to anybody claiming to be related to or closely associated with the chairman or any commissioner," Bautista said.

The department and office circulars were issued in support of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Administrative Order No. 1, which cautioned all government employees against entering into certain kinds of official transactions with real, pretended or imaginary relatives of top government officials.

BSP unlikely to cut rates

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said Friday it was unlikely to trim its key rates ahead of an expected US interest rates cut this week, as the Bureau of Treasury attempts to restructure its borrowings to bring down government costs.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza told reporters a no-change decision of monetary authorities last week would also keep the government's borrowing rate steady in today's auction, with a chance of a slight decline.

"Since liquidity in the market is still very strong, there is a chance for a downward bias of about five basis points. But rates would generally be closer to the last auction," said Edeza.

The 91-day treasury bill rate, a benchmark for government borrowings, slid by 8.2 basis points to 10.525 percent in last week's auction. The six-month debt papers went down by 1.3 percent to 11.9 percent while the one-year T-bill rate improved by 13.2 percent to 12.5 percent.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the Monetary Board would keep its key policy rates at current levels of 11 percent for overnight borrowing and 13.25 percent for overnight lending as analysts forecast a higher inflation rate for February.

"It is probably premature to undertake another rates cut. We want to wait for the inflation numbers as well as the US Fed announcement," said the BSP chief.

He noted that analysts and private sector groups believed that February inflation would be at least at par but most likely higher than January rate of 6.9 percent.

Islacom sees debt cut next month

ISLA Communications Inc. has announced that its recapitalization next month should cut its debts to $130 million from over $500 million.

Islacom chief finance officer Gil Genio told reporters the company's recapitalization—in line with its acquisition by Globe Telecom Inc.—would be funded by Deutsche Telekom AG. The German telecommunications giant was committed to pouring an additional $240 million into Islacom.

Genio said part of the amount was advanced last year by Deutsche Telekom to help pay for Islacom's ballooning debts.

The $240-million capital infusion from Deutsche Telekom was part of an escrow account placed with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas pending regulatory approval of the Globe-Islacom merger.

Genio said with the new money it would get, Islacom would continue to install more telephone lines in Cebu, Bohol, Negros, Panay, Leyte and Samar. The company was required by its franchise to roll out 700,000 lines in these areas. Genio said Islacom had only 60,000 lines to go to meet this target.

Infoserve predicts $500-M income

INFOSERVE International Inc., a US banking software company, has set a goal of earning $200 million in five years by tapping Filipino talent in developing software.

Infoserve president and chief operating officer George Lissandrello told reporters in a news conference on Friday that the company was keeping its software development hub here in the country.

"Our strategy is to use the Philippines as a success story. It is an ideal test hub for our products," said Lissandrello.

Infoserve, which was originally a 100-percent Filipino company, has its main business in the Philippines, where it serves 70 banks with over 700 branches.

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ON UNCERTAIN OUTLOOK

Bear Stearns sees big chance of US Fed rates cut this week

NEW YORK—Bear Stearns said Friday there was a 60-percent chance that the Federal Reserve would cut US interest rates this week in the face of falling consumer confidence and stock prices and an uncertain outlook for business spending.

"There is a 60-percent probability the Fed will be cutting rates early this week," said John Ryding, a senior managing director and senior economist at Bear Stearns, quoting from a report also signed by chief economist Wayne Angell, a former Fed governor.

The Fed's next scheduled rate-setting meeting is on March 20, but the central bank on Jan. 3 took the rare step of slashing short-term interest rates between regular meetings to insulate a swiftly slowing economy from a recession.

The Fed cut its benchmark federal funds rate by a full percentage point to 5.5 percent in January.

Ryding said unraveling US stock markets reflected a pessimistic view of the prospects for corporate earnings, and risked further undermining the confidence of US consumers, whose spending drives two-thirds of all economic activity.

The technology-laden Nasdaq composite index has tumbled some 56 percent from its record peaks in March 2000 to two-year lows this week.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index has lost 19 percent from its 2000 peaks to two-year lows on Friday.

"Stock market declines reflect deteriorating confidence in the second half of the year. Corporate managers are saying that the outlook for capital spending is becoming more uncertain," Ryding said.

"At the same time, there is a linkage between that and consumer confidence," he said.

A key gauge of consumer sentiment, the Conference Board's consumer confidence index, would be released on Tuesday morning, and Ryding said Fed chief Alan Greenspan would likely know the numbers by Monday.

Early last week, Greenspan testified to the Senate that the sluggish economy, while at risk of even slower growth, would likely avoid a recession and grow at a moderate clip later this year.

But he singled out consumer confidence as a key determinant of whether the economy risked sliding into recession.

Since he last spoke, the closely watched University of Michigan index of consumer confidence tumbled to seven-year lows and major US stock indexes plunged to a two-year floor. *Reuters*

US employers to cut second quarter hiring

MILWAUKEE—US employers plan to cut back their hiring in the second quarter, according to a Manpower Inc. survey of nearly 16,000 companies.

The report, released on Friday, found that 28 percent plan to hire more people, 8 percent expect to cut staff, 59 percent intend no change and 5 percent are undecided. In the same quarter a year ago, 32 percent anticipated additions, 6 percent predicted decreases, 58 percent were unchanged and 4 percent were uncertain.

While year-earlier results were the highest for a second quarter since 1978, the current outlook is below comparable periods in the past three years, Manpower said.

"We have seen remarkably consistent demand for new workers for more than three years and very substantial hiring remains to be done," said Jeffrey Joerres, Manpower's chief executive officer, in a statement. "But the slowdown now on the horizon is considerably greater than seasonal variation alone."

All industries and regions are expecting a decline, although durable goods manufacturing and wholesale and retail trades were hit the hardest.

Manufacturers of durable goods expect a larger drop than what would normally be expected, with 30 percent hiring more people and 12 percent trimming back. Among the wholesale and retail trades, 28 percent are still looking for people and 10 percent anticipate staff decreases. *Reuters*

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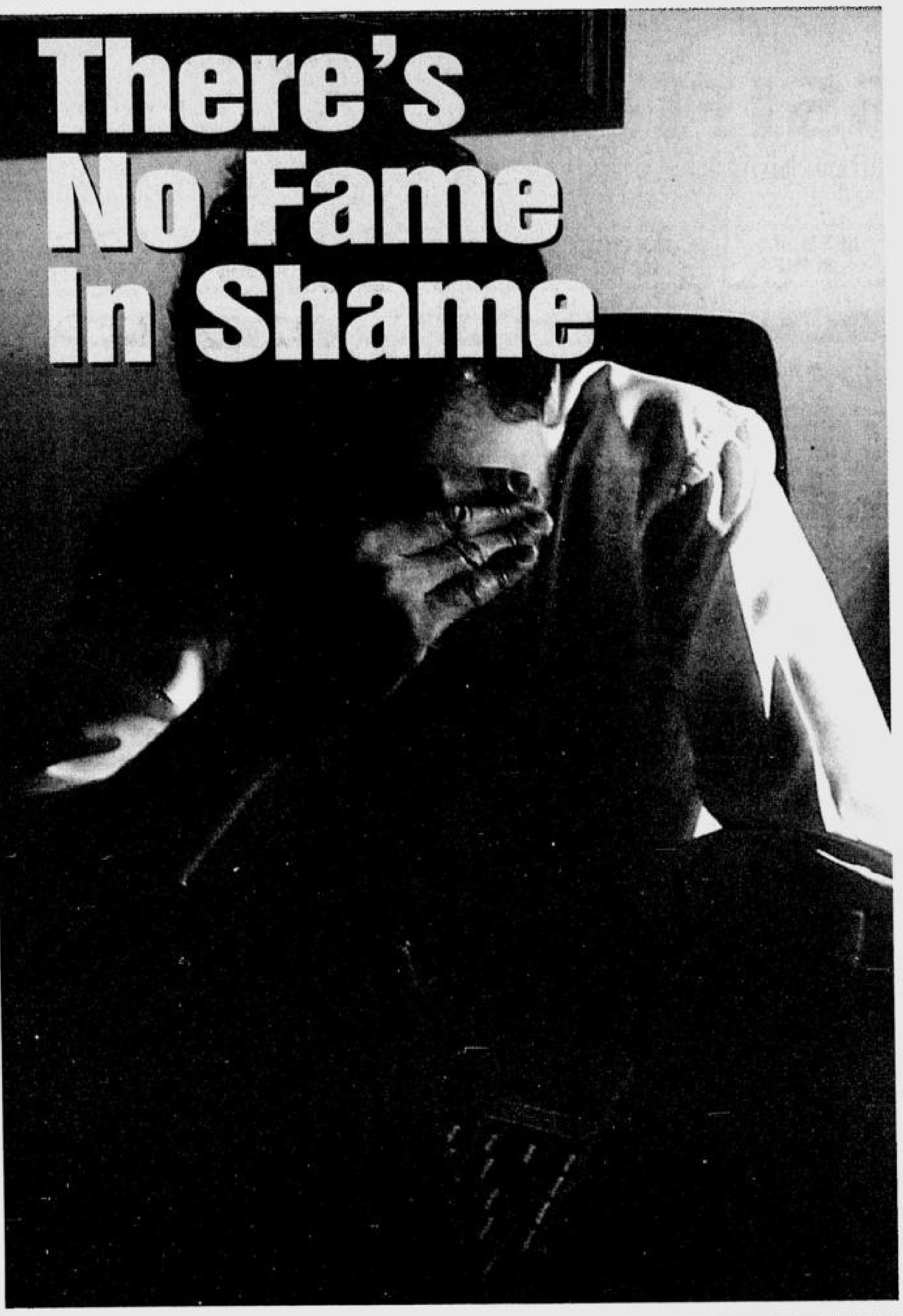

Last October, the Business Software Alliance (BSA) raised the reward for reporting software piracy in companies to P1 million. Since then, the number of reports to BSA has increased, enabling the National Bureau of Investigation to escalate its enforcement.

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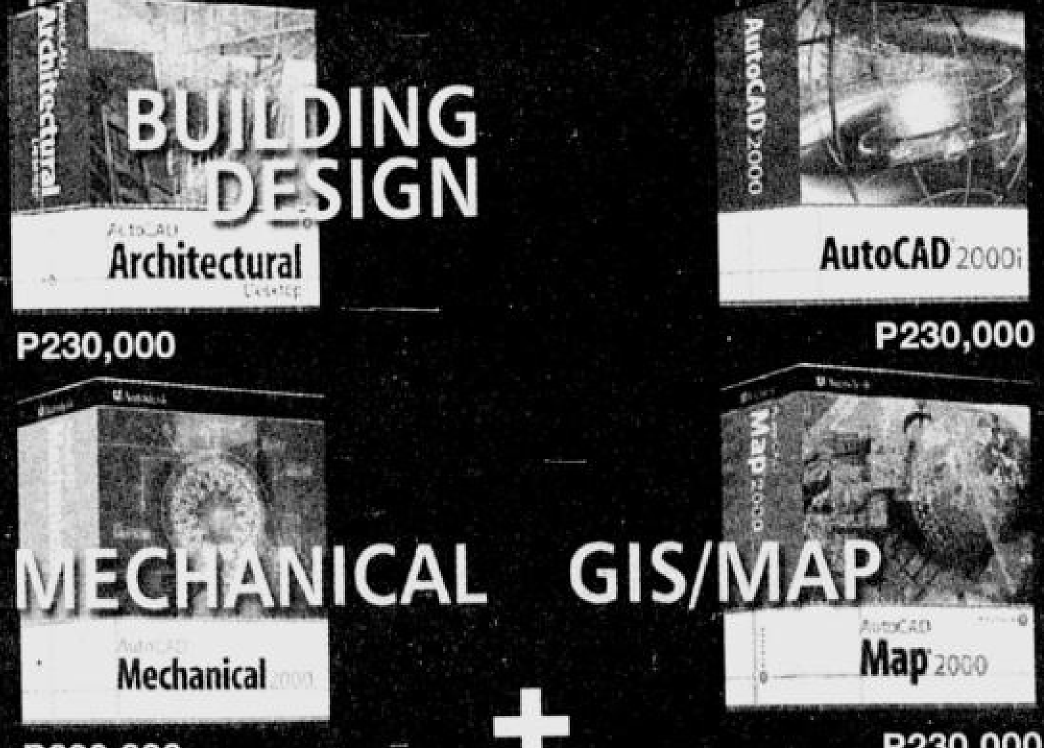

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Tagaytay 2Adj Lots 780 & 805m² • 723-2391

Tagaytay Country Homes I 135m² 3200/m² 928-3267

Villa Segovia E Kingdom 296sqm 2Lots • 531-3742

Villa Segovia Sta. Rosa 2 Corner Lots • T531-3742

OTHER AREAS

7049m² Malinta Valenzuela Tel.# 928-1469

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

OTHER AREAS

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Comm'l Lot 600m² Along Hway Malanday • 911-7940

Ibuna nr P.Guevarra 231m² 20T/m² w/Fence 928-3267

METROGATE
along North Express Way Cash or Installment Tel.# 432-7973 • 292-9641

Sta. Mesa Heoghts 480m² 210m² 18-20T/m² 928-3267

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MAKATI

1BR Fully Furnished P3.5M Salcedo Vill. • 911-7940

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Btful 3br Condo FFurnsh Skyland Mktl 4 Sale 6.2M Rent 45T 533-9776

Btful 3br Condo FFurnsh Alexandra Pasig 4 Sale 12.5M / Rent 85T 533-9776

Millenium Mkt Ave P2.9M 1B FA55m² • 534-7949

•88 Corp. Ctr BNew 178m² Sale or Rent 412-1825

nr GREENBELT b new 1-3br 4121825/ 09177914366

nr GREENBELT 3br 250m² 25M 4121825 09177914366

•Rushi Le Domain 2BR 6M •90m² 4121825/ 150341394

Westgate Salcedo 1B 1CG FF FA60m² P4.5M 6347949

MANILA

NrlaSalle 3sty3BR T899-2148

Sta. Ana TH 3BR 3TB 2ps P5.9 & 6.8M • 911-7940

MANDALUYONG

Condo New Unit 1-2BR's Mandaluyong • 533-5525

Various Mandaluyong Townhouses 534-6610 Jojo

Various Wack-Wack Condo Lee Gardens 5346610 Jojo

Wack² Tower 28 3TB Mds Rm 1ps P5.5M • 911-7940

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6.5M Townhse Kawilihan Vill Pasig 141-259275

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Nr C5 Res/Com TH 6M 3St FA156 0%Int 5yrs 645-3731

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Cubao CondoP1.3M EZterm 9126976/9132224/4381480

Scout 3BR 3TB MQTB Attic 2CG P4M Call 532-3588; 0919-5825646

Teachers Village 4M New 50%DP Bal 2yrs No Int. 3BR3TB MQ CG Attic A/con Mark 9220939 • 5323588 Cell 0919-5825646

Cubao 17door Apt Fully Conc Fin. 13M 645-3731

Nr G'hill 2BR 2TB 87m² BN RFO Nice Loc • 645-3731

Cubao 14th Avenue Apt. 460/m² • 658-2410

Bnew Gilmore / N. Domingo P3.6M 90m² 2br DBO 721-5226

Loyola Country Club Mansion/Thse Avail 6578185

Loyola Grand Mansion LA180 FA200 616M 657-8185

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

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Mapayapa Vill Thse P2.2M Terms Call 412-1652 Jen

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Nova P5T/mo.10yrs 9390299

Nr Ateneo FA149m² LA72 4M 3BR 2BT • 645-3731

Nr EDSA Dplex 3BR LA80 FA80 BN nice loc • 645-3731

Nr EDSA FA64 LA50 2TB BN nice loc 2.7M 645-3731

Nr West Ave F230m² 4.2M 3BR 4TB 2CG New 4134411

Panay Thse QC Newly Ren. 3Sty 5BR P5M • 928-3267

Scout Area 3BR 3TB 2CG MR w/TB 5.5M • 928-2497

Sta Mesa Hts 120m² 4.5M 3Sty 4BR w/2CG 413-4411

Teachers Vill QC 3BR 2TB 1CG P2.5M • 928-2497

Teresa Hts Bung 240m² 4br nr SM Fview 3.5M 9283267

TH LA85m² FA165m² 3BR 3TB P3.3M F'view 9117940

TH LA91m² FA70m² 3BR 2TB @ P2.8M • 911-7940

RIZAL

VILLA OLYMPIA THSE Cainta, Rizal • 657-8185

SAN JUAN

South Admiral 490 sqm Rushi • Pager 1277-37052

Annapolis GH Condo 3BR 170m² Nice MdsRm 9283267

Eisenhower Comm'l Unit 53.80sqm • T531-3742

Francis Court San Juan LA200 FA269 • 928-2497

Ghills 3BR FFur P5.5M; 2BR Ofc/Res P3.8M 723-2391

G'hills Condo 3BR P5.5M w/Huge Balcony •723-2391

G'hills Ofc Condo 70m² w/ Pkrg FFur P3.2M 723-2391

Ghills 3BR FFurn FA138 Btul View P5.6M 7232391

Greenhill Condo 1BR FA70 P3M • 723-2391

Greenhills Anapolis Condo 3BR P9-11M • 723-2391

Greenhills Eisenhower St. 3br Condo P6-8M 723-2391

Greenhills Ofc Condo 70m² w/Prkg P31M • 723-2391

Greenhills Thse 3BR FA180 2CarGrg • 723-2391 P6.8M

SAN JUAN CONDO 3BR 137 P4M • 723-2391

Eisenhower Twr 53.8sqm Furnished • 531-3742

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QUEZON CITY

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CONDO/TWNHSE

PASAY

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PASIG

Alexandra 3BR@P55T/mo FF Ren 3BR UF P40T 681-2457

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'94 LANCER TAXI CAB P160T • Tel.# 658-2410

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given of the extrajudicial settlement of estate w/ sale executed by the heirs of DOMINGA S. TIONGSON on 1⅛501 acknowledge before Notary Public Atty Elsa V. Perlas of Pasig City per Doc 113, Page 89, Book XCIV Series of 2001 PDIFeb19,26&Mar5,01

NOTICE OF LOSS

This is to notify the Public that Official Receipt with Serial No. 4903 to 4950 will not be honored by Tower Group Asia. *(PDI- Feb 24 & 26, 2001)*

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective **February 1, 2001 issue.**

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS
(National Edition)
Box Ad - P230.00/col. cm.
Line Ad - P 65.00/line
Obituaries - P230.00/col. cm.

JOB MARKET
(Metro Manila Edition)
Box Ad - P190.00/col. cm.

Color Surcharge for NC and JM
1 spot color - 30%
2 spot color - 60%
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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
INDUSTRY & INVESTMENTS BUILDING
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SUPPORT PHILIPPINES 2000

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **SMART COMMUNICATIONS, INC.** with office address at 12/F Rufino Pacific Tower, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City for registration with the Board of Investments under Book 1 of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as Expanding Operator of Telecommunication System (Nationwide Cellular, Mobile Telephone Service - GSM) at a capacity of 730 Base-Transceiver Stations and with cell sites Nationwide has been officially accepted on 19 February 2001, and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the abovementioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 19th day of February 2001.

(Sgd.) C. O. ANGELES
Director
Legal Services Department

(PDI - Feb 26, 2001)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
AD NO. PD 2001-11

Bidding Date : March 15, 2001 10:00 AM
Pre-Bid Conference : March 12, 2001 2:00 PM
(Sampaguita Room)

SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR PARCELLARY MAPPING AND INVESTIGATION SURVEY:

I. GROUND CONTROLS, PLAN/PROFILE & STAKE OUT, TOPO/DIAGONAL PROFILE OF TOWER SITES FOR 110 KMS. TRANSMISSION 69 KV ST/SC CABAROQUIS-CASIGURAN
II. RELOCATION AND SUB-DIVISION SURVEY OF AFFECTED MAIN/SUB-LOTS FOR TAP TALAVERA/QUEZON/GUIMBA 69-KV T/L PROJECT (24.2 KMS.); AND
III. RELOCATION AND SUBDIVISION SURVEY OF AFFECTED MAIN/SUB-LOTS FOR PUERTO PRINCESA-ROXAS 138 KV ST/SC T/L PROJECT (111.12 KMS) PER TERM OF REFERENCE

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above using TWO ENVELOPE SYSTEM to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor, Bldg. 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Rd., Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms will be issued at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2, NPC-OBC, Diliman, Quezon City, upon presentation of this advertisement clipping, payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory starting February 21, 2001. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms on March 2, 2001.

Bidding documents will be issued from March 5 to 9, 2001 upon payment of P200.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE) at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services.

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. For inquiries please call no. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the corporation.

PBAC - SERVICE CONTRACTS OF PARCELLARY MAPPING AND INVESTIGATION SURVEY FOR 69KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT NPC-OBC (Head Office), Diliman, Q.C.

(PDI - Feb 21 & 26 2001)

Inquirer's Makati Branch

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SAN LORENZO VILLAGE
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PARAÑAQUE
HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL
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- Below 45 years of age
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IMMIGRATION SEMINAR DETAILS

DAGUPAN SEMINAR: (4 in 1) Date : February 28, 2001 (Wednesday) Time : 03:00 p.m. Venue : Star Plaza Hotel AB Fernandez Avenue, Dagupan City	Fee: P 700 pre-paid P 1,000 walk-in Tel: (075) 515-4973 522-7829 515-5726 (0918) 910-2994
MANILA SEMINAR: (Australia & New Zealand only) Date : March 03, 2001 (Saturday) Time : 11:00 a.m. Venue : Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Pasay City	Fee: P 700 pre-paid P 900 walk-in Tel: 891-5924 891-5624 891-5636 (0917) 466-8097

Assessment will be conducted by our
AUSTRALIAN / NEW ZEALAND IMMIGRATION SPECIALIST
MR. MARK F. RILEY
Senior Migration Officer of the Australian Embassy in Manila
14 years in Australian Migration Practice

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL OR VISIT US @
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* Complete with auxiliary equipment, special tools and spare parts

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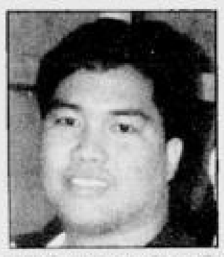

EDWIN EMPIC FORTE

This is to serve notice to our customers and the public that **MR. EDWIN E. FORTE** whose picture appears above, has ceased to be an employee of **Maxitech Manufacturing, Inc.** and now stands accused of Estafa in Criminal Case No. 01-144 before the Regional Trial Court, Makati City.

Any transaction entered into by the said Edwin E. Forte for the company or for its marketing arm, CRML Enterprises, Inc. shall not be honoured.

The Management
MAXITECH MANUFACTURING, INC.
CRML ENT., INC.

(PDI - Feb. 26, 2001)

INQUIRER TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Nuts

Q. How did nuts come to be served with liquor?

A. Blame the ancient Romans, who well knew the intoxicating effects of alcohol. They believed that the eating of almonds would counteract it. So to keep their guests sober, they served them almonds—and later other kinds of nuts—with their drinks, which became an integral part of every party. When eventually experience showed the futility of the practice, this had become so much of a habit that it was kept on without remembering its original purpose.

Ooops! The peanut is not a nut (which grows aboveground on trees) but a legume, a member of the bean family, and one whose seed pods grow underground.

Past Forward. This day in 1815: Napoleon Bonaparte, convinced that France would welcome him from exile, left the island of Elba with an army 1,000 strong to begin the so-called Hundred Days' return to power. He succeeded in raising and equipping an army of 300,000 but Britain and Prussia led an alliance that defeated him at the Battle of Waterloo (which was not the actual site), Belgium, in June.

For the Record. A couple in Jacksonville, Florida, was arrested last year after their three-year-old son shot and killed their two-year-old daughter with a loaded gun left lying around the house. Police found dozens of other guns in the residence, including three more within the easy reach of children. The couple was tried and sentenced to (only) five years in jail.

WORD WATCH

Boga : slang for 'gun,' from a reshaping of the Tagalog *buga*, 'to puff, or blow out of the mouth (or barrel of a gun).''

PDI – February 26, 2001

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Don Antonio O. Camahort, Jr.

Entrego su alma al Creador el 24 de febrero de 2001
a la edad de 68 años.

Su esposa, Mila; Hijos, Maribel, Poch, Millie, Mike, Maite y Martin; Hijos, Politicos, Francis, Mitos, Jaime, Machalen, Bobby y Missy; Nietos, Juami, Monica, Ines, Gerry y Camille, Katrina y Paolo; Sus hermanos, hermanos politicos y demas familia ruegan una oracion por su alma.

Las misas que se celebraran todos los dias a las 7:00 de la noche en la iglesia de St. Alphonsus de Ligouri, Magallanes Village, Makati City, desde el domingo, 25 de febrero hasta el 27 de febrero, seran aplicadas por su eterno descanso.

El funeral tendra lugar el miercoles dia 28 de febrero, a las nueve de la mañana, celebrandose a continuacion el entierro en la misma iglesia.

In Loving Memory
on the
15th Death Anniversary
of

NEMESIO I. YABUT

1925 – 1986

Masses will be offered today, February 26, 2001 at the following churches:

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PARISH Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City	6:00 AM
STS. PETER & PAUL CHAPEL P. Burgos St., Makati City	6:00 AM
SACRED HEART CHAPEL San Antonio Village, Makati City	6:00 AM
SANCTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH Forbes Park, Makati City	12:15 NN
STO. NIÑO DE PAZ CHAPEL Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City	12:15 NN
NUESTRA SRA. DE GRACIA PARISH Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City	6:00 PM
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI CHAPEL Magallanes Village, Makati City	6:00 PM
ST. ANDREW, THE APOSTLE PARISH Bel-Air II, Makati City	6:30 PM
ST. JOHN BOSCO PARISH Pasay Road, Makati City	6:30 PM

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

ROMEO G. GONZALES

1933-2001

Died in the Grace of our Lord at the age of 67.

His bereaved wife, children, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 28, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at the Loyola Chapels.

"She lighted our path... Leading us to a life of love...
Guiding us to believe and have faith.
Living by His example, she was a great shepherd of a flock"

OUR DEARLY BELOVED

VICTORIA SAN ANTONIO ROURA

of a devoted wife, an inspiring mother, a loving grandmother.
Peacefully joined our Lord on February 23, 2001 at the age of 67

Her loving husband, **Leonardo C. Roura**;
Her loving children, **Orly & Raquel**, **Bong & Violy**, **Omer** and **Jocelyn**, **Olive** and **Pip**;
Her grandchildren, **Olga**, **Omar** (†), **Olivette**, **Jiro**, **Kim**, **Pio & Pol**;
Her brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Dulong Kalsada Chapel, San Jose, San Miguel, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 28, 2001 at Sta. Rita Memorial Park, San Miguel, Bulacan after the 3:00 P.M. Mass at the St. Joseph Quasi Parish.

So Lovingly Remembered So Sadly Missed
on the 10th Death Anniversary of

VIRGILIO (Ver) G. GALMAN

on February 26, 2001
of Quezon City and Los Angeles, California

His wife **LEONOR P. MISMANOS**; brother **Patrocinio**; sister-in-law **Herminia Verde** request relatives, friends and readers to remember ***VER*** in their prayers.

Masses will be offered today, February 26 at the following Churches:

Sacred Heart Church, Kamuning, *Quezon City*	7:00 AM
San Juan Nepomuceno Church, *San Juan, Batangas*	6:30 AM
Paombong Church, *Paombong, Bulacan*	6:00 AM
Guiguinto Catholic Church, *Bulacan*	6:00 AM
Cathedral of San Sebastian, *Lipa City*	7:00 AM
OSJ Minor Seminary, *San Jose, Batangas*	6:30 AM
Queen of Peace Church, *Ocala, Florida*	8:30 AM
St. Columban Church, *Los Angeles, California*	6:00 AM
Galman's Garden, *North Cemetery*	9:00 AM

MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

ELIZABETH TOLENTINO FONTANILLA

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 17, 2001

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in so many ways condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

"You will forever be in our hearts"

Tomas H. Liao

of Masbate, Masbate and Binondo, Manila

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 25, 2001
at the age of 60.

His loving wife **Letty**; children **Annabelle** and **Hersey**, **Leslie**, **Lizel**, **Lawrence**; grandchild **Hanzel Andre** and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.
His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.
Interment to be announced later.

ENGR. ANGELITO "ANGEL / MEG" J. ZABELLA

of Tayabas, Quezon

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 23, 2001
at the age of 66.

His bereaved wife **Cecilia H. Zabella** (†); children **Litton**, **Minfa**, **Leilani**; brothers and sister **Eleuterio Jr.**, **Rudy** and **Tudy**, **Tony**, **Tessie**; all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, February 27, 2001 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at Funeraria Paz.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28

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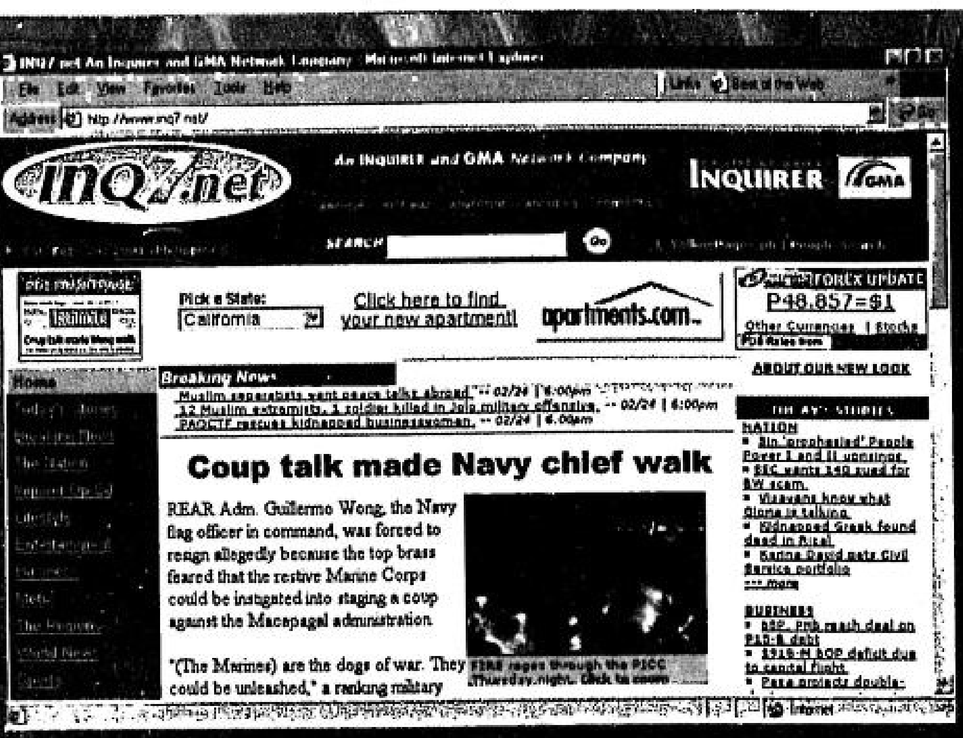
LEO MAGNO, Editor



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FOREX UPDATE P48.857=$1

Breaking News

Muslim separatists want peace talks abroad -- 02/24 | 6:00pm

12 Muslim extremists, 1 soldier killed in Jolo military offensive. -- 02/24 | 6:00pm

PAOCTF rescues kidnapped businessman. -- 02/24 | 6:00pm

Coup talk made Navy chief walk

REAR Adm. Guillermo Wong, the Navy flag officer in command, was forced to resign allegedly because the top brass feared that the restive Marine Corps could be instigated into staging a coup against the Macapagal administration.

"(The Marines) are the dogs of war. They could be unleashed," a ranking military

FIRE rages through the PICC Thursday night. Click to zoom

NATION

- Sin 'prophesied' People Power I and II uprisings.
- SEC wants 140 sued for BW scam.
- Visayans know what Gloria is talking.
- Kidnapped Greek found dead in Rizal.
- Karina David gets Civil Service portfolio

BUSINESS

- BSP, Pnb reach deal on P10-B debt
- $919-M BOP deficit due to capital flight.

New media giant takes baby steps

INQ7.net to be launched tomorrow

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

BY NOW perhaps you've seen the newspaper ad asking: "How do you fit two giants into one page?" (if you haven't yet, turn the page and look at the ad on Page B16). Or perhaps you've heard news host Mike Enriquez on TV citing a certain website called INQ7.net as "your home, your newwws."

By now you're probably aware that the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) has bought into GMA Network Inc. and now owns two-thirds of the broadcasting firm. Or perhaps you've stumbled upon the news that INQ7.net, the baby of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network Inc., is about to take its first baby steps into the wild, wild Web in a formal launch tomorrow at the GMA Network Center, with no less than President Macapagal gracing the occasion.

Either you have been hiding under a rock or have been cast away on an island for four years if none of the abovementioned events sound familiar to you.

To refresh your memory, the Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network Inc. signed an agreement on July 20, 2000, creating an online news website called INQ7.net. On Feb. 20, 2001, the Securities and Exchange Commission gave the company a go-signal, making INQ7 Interactive Inc. a legal entity. The partnership is a 50-50 joint venture between the country's leading newspaper and the country's most awarded news network.

For the last seven months, INQ7.net provided both news and information to Filipinos all over the world, specifically to the United States where 90 percent of its readers are based.

The website has transformed the static Inquirer.net into a website providing regular updates, breaking news, and blow-by-blow accounts of important events in the Philippines such as the impeachment trial of ousted president Joseph Estrada and the People Power II Edsa Revolution. The website also provides streaming video and audio of GMA-7's news-oriented programs.

On Feb. 8, 2001, PLDT announced its buy-in into GMA 7 through Mediaquest, a subsidiary of PLDT's beneficial trust fund. GMA 7 agreed to sell two-thirds (66.67 percent) of the company for P8.5 billion to the telecom giant.

PLDT views the acquisition as a step toward the development of its multimedia business interests and its convergence initiatives because the multi-awarded broadcasting firm adds another layer to the telephone company's convergence pie.

Earlier, the telephone company disclosed plans of offering direct-to-home satellite television multi-media services using a mix of various media and content. PLDT currently owns Home Cable Television, broadcasting firm NBC and a substantial interest in MTV Philippines.

"There will be a lot of interaction among the three (PLDT, GMA and the INQUIRER) particularly with the advent of interactive TV. However, there are still a number of challenges to be bridged," Laura Jimenez-Westfall, INQ7.net board member, says when asked about the implications of the PLDT-GMA partnership on INQ7.net.

Considering that delivery of video online "is still not in its ideal state" in the Philippines, Jimenez-Westfall said that PLDT would eventually provide affordable broadband technology to Filipinos.

PLDT, indeed, perceives the GMA acquisition to involve improvement of "access to international providers of capital and content."

The telephone company added that

INQ7.NET/ p. B16

GMA AT GMA

PRESIDENT Macapagal will be the guest of honor at the launch of INQ7 Interactive Inc. tomorrow at the GMA Network Center at the corner of Timog Avenue and Edsa. The program starts at 5 p.m., but invited guests are advised to be at the venue no later than 4:30 p.m. since the venue will be closed to prepare for the arrival of the President.

PC Express Warehouse Sale!!!

No longer the tool of an exclusive few, the computer has become to modern life what the wheel probably was to generations past, a powerful, multi utility tool absolutely essential for modern living. Presidents, leaders of powerful companies, wall street stockbrokers, engineers and down the line all the way to school children have all, in one way or the other, relied upon the computer to help them in their daily tasks and make their work easier and more productive.

PC Express was established with definite goals in mind, one of which is to make the computer accessible to the average Filipino by selling them at some of the lowest prices available in the market. Price has always been the biggest deterrent in buying a computer. Nowadays, with the prices PC Express offers, any Tom, Dick or Juan can easily afford to purchase their very own computer for use in their home, office or for their children and all transactions usually take less time than they would in other PC retailers. The process is very simple and straightforward. We offer the best options at the best prices. And all made available to you in the least amount of time required. PC Express indeed.

As another school year approaches, PC Express strives to make it even easier for parents to purchase computers for their children by offering the PC Express Computer Warehouse SALE. Aside from the very low prices which PC Express already offers to the public, selected items bought within this 3-day period (March 2-4, 2001) will have discounts from their SRP (Suggested Retail Price) by as much as 60%! And these aren't just bits and pieces of a computer. We guarantee that among the items we've made available for sale, you can piece together your very own computer, all at a very low and discounted price. Best of all, they all come with a one (1) year warranty!

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Armed with an initial capital investment of Php. 1M and establishing its maiden branch at the corner of Gilmore Avenue and Aurora Boulevard, the company soon found itself in direct competition with some of the most prestigious and successful players in the business. Customers discovered soon enough though, that PC Express was no pushover when it came to providing fast service, basement prices and an ever growing and comprehensive list of merchandise compose of some of the most durable and trusted names in computer products, such as Intel, Creative, AMD, Hewlett Packard, Epson, Canon and Compaq to name but a few.

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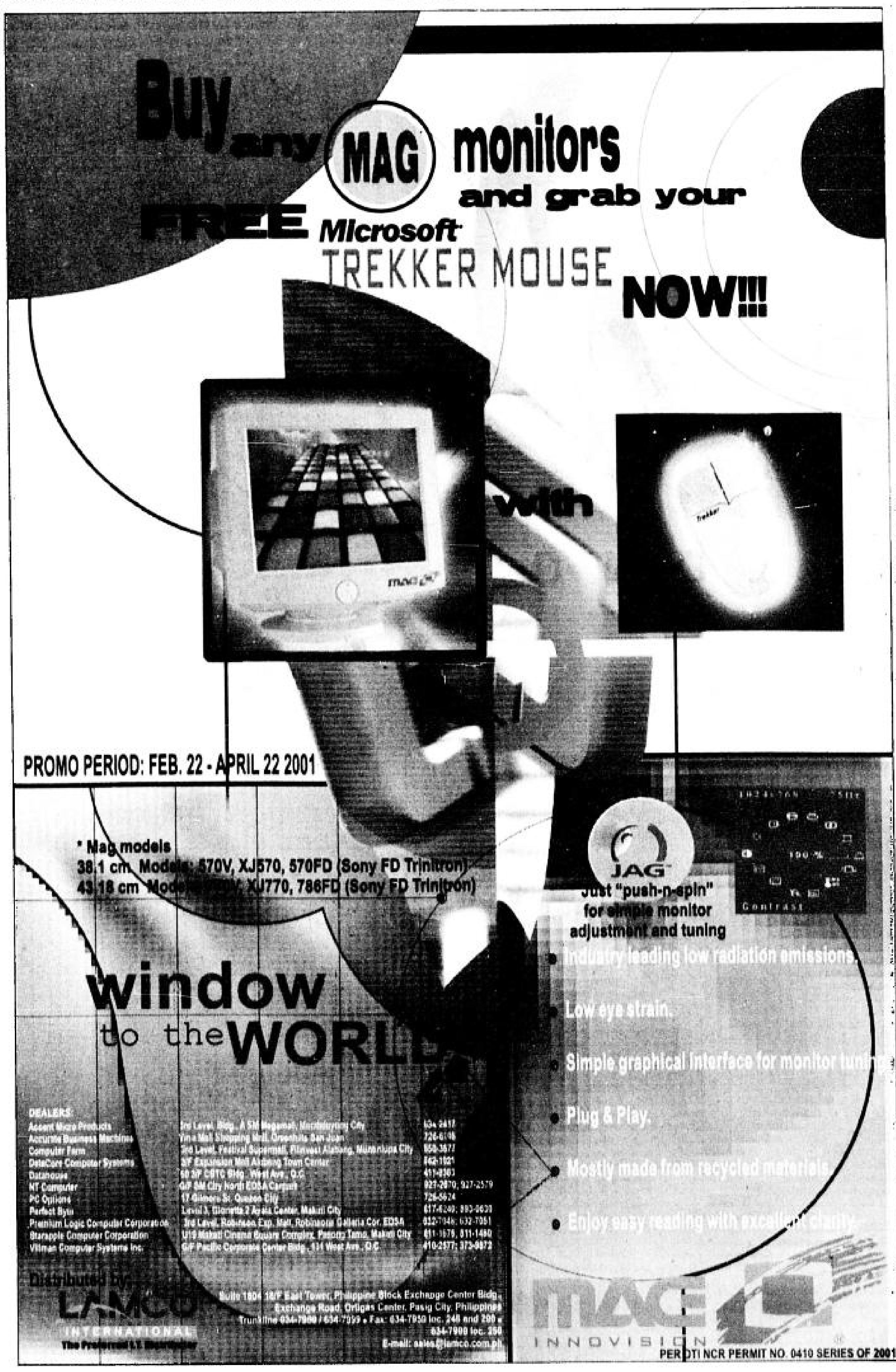

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It's still the news that matters in old or new media

By Getsy M. Selirio

OKAY, a confession: I started work in journalism in the era of the typewriter. There were no cell phones, faxes, not even pagers—and definitely there were no personal computers linked to the Internet. As a young reporter during this period I did stories the old-fashioned way. After interviewing sources around Manila, doing research, grabbing documents, I made my way back to our newspaper office in Quezon City (the old Business Day) to file my stories.

In the office, an old but reliable typewriter awaited me. Its cover was missing, which exposed its simple machinery—the well-ordered keys, the black fabric called a ribbon and a roller on which the paper is inserted. When there are a dozen or more journalists vigorously typing at the same time, minds on fire, there's not a more delightful sound in the world.

Then there was the "cut and paste" system. This consisted of tearing the paper with the edge of a ruler and stapling the parts together. You want to delete? A big "X" mark with a red pen usually does the trick—ask any of the veteran editors.

When personal computers came into vogue sometime in the mid-'80s, I think I adjusted pretty quickly. The first machines were after all no more than just word processors. "Wordstar" comes to mind as one of the first software that I had enjoyed using. And while I loved the typewriter, I must admit that PCs just made my life easier as a writer. I don't think I need to expound on how. Let's just say I don't miss staplers and smudged fingers.

Another plus for me as a journalist amid the advances in computer technology was that it allowed me to learn desktop publishing. At the old Manila Chronicle, the Lopezes decided it was best to equip the entire editorial operations with Macintosh computers.

All the editors were required to learn to lay out the newspaper pages on the Macintosh using QuarkExpress. The idea wasn't to eliminate the production people but to create a new breed of journalist—one with a strong sense of news, the language skills and the technical expertise in the new computer age.

Section editors at the Chronicle took charge of their own pages from the writing, editing, design and up to the laser printing stage. This was a classic case of multitasking. It was hard work, but all worth it, especially when you sense in yourself the seamless blend of the technical and the creative.

The Internet came in the '90s, and with it the revolution in information and communications, the field of journalism included.

I got an inkling of this when working in the United States in the early 1990s. Electronic mail was just starting to come in vogue, and at the Philadelphia Inquirer where I worked, an internal e-mail system was already in operation. It was just a matter of time before a journalist started doing interviews with sources via e-mail, instead of "pounding the pavement," so to speak.

If PCs changed the way reporters produced and sent in their stories, the Internet in turn changed the way people viewed the news.

From their homes, offices or on the road, the news can now be read 24 hours a day. No more overnight wait for your newspaper. News sites such as INQ7.net are online by midnight every day. Even before that, the news can already be known via the INQUIRER and GMA story logs, or even earlier—as the news happens—via INQ7.net's Breaking News section.

News today can be downloaded, forwarded or printed. You can give immediate feedback to the writer or editor. It is this immediacy and interactivity that is defining the new online journalism. Some further observations about the evolving new medium:

- In old media, you had the luxury of time. You can rewrite a story, gather more background or interviews, or even ask your editor to reschedule its publication for another day. With Web news, there is no such luxury. The story needs to come out as it happens. Therein lie its value and its appeal. It is timely, accurate and quick to digest. An example is the Edsa People Power II coverage, wherein we got the stories out within minutes after they happen. Web news is more akin to the newsgathering operations of an international news agency, where competition was counted in seconds. It was fast but accurate and well-written news just the same.
- Stories usually get very long in the old media. Here in the Web, there are other considerations, tech-

IT'S/ p.B17

INQ7.net to be launched tomorrow

(From page B15)

it would eventually explore future opportunities in further consolidations in the Philippine media industry.

PLDT predicted that the merger of the "leading local content production and ePLDT's Internet-based initiatives" would create new media services such as interactive television.

"I think Manny Pangilinan (CEO of PLDT) needs GMA to leapfrog PLDT into television. GMA has the credibility and more important, the momentum. The PLDT and GMA tie-up creates a much larger Philippine media organization. It's still not much compared to the global giants, but it's a good step in the right direction," said Dennis Valdes, president and CEO of Inquirer Interactive Inc.

"I'm in favor of PLDT's buy-in into GMA-7," Valdes added.

So what would happen to INQ7.net now with PLDT's acquisition of two-thirds of GMA-7?

"INQ7.net would be even bigger and better! We will have the ideal synergies of content plus delivery," remarked Jimenez-Westfall.

But what will happen to the existing websites of the two companies?

Valdes, for his part, said that the INQUIRER website (Inquirer.net) has become part of the INQ7 site.

"There may still be a need for a smaller corporate website, but clearly the INQUIRER is putting all its chips in this basket," he says.

"For GMA, it would be more complex. They have non-news shows and even the news shows have their own deals with GMA, so the INQ7.net website would probably be buying news content from GMA initially," Valdes said.

GMA's corporate website (gmanetwork.com), however, would remain and co-exist with INQ7.net in a happy complement, according to Judith Duavit-Vasquez, INQ7.net chair of the board.

"INQ7.net is GMA's News and Public Affairs window, while gmanetwork.com would focus on the entertainment content of the network," Duavit-Vasquez added.

Duavit-Vasquez is also confident that INQ7.net will not vanish like other dotcoms after their initial hype. The INQUIRER and GMA, she said, will concentrate their Internet news development efforts on INQ7.net, meaning the website will remain as long as the newspaper and the broadcasting network are still around.

"And that is for decades yet to come," she said.

Mobile news from INQ7.net

THE BREAKING news items from Inquirer Interactive Inc. or INQ7.net is not limited to the Web. Starting tomorrow, when INQ7.net is formally launched, the speedy delivery of news items from the website will also be carried on mobile phones via SMS (short message service) and WAP (wireless application protocol).

Even better, subscribers of either Globe Telecom or Smart Communications—the two digital mobile phone carriers in the country—will be able to access mobile INQ7.net news from two of the country's leading news organizations: the Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network.

Top headlines, business and entertainment news can be accessed through your cellular phones by using the following keywords for SMS or text messaging: "inq7(space)news," "inq7(space)biz" and inq7(space)show."

Using a WAP-enabled telephone, you can bookmark INQ7 Interactive's wapsite at "http:\\wap.inq7.net\" or get it from the WAP home pages of either Globe or Smart.

As a service to its online and mobile readers, INQ7.net endeavored to bring its WAP and SMS news to both Globe and Smart subscribers so that more Filipinos could stay abreast of the latest news as gathered and processed by the INQUIRER, GMA-7 and the INQ7.net editorial team. INQ7.net will continue to redefine the meaning of "online news" by bringing its content to more networks (such as the Internet, TV, radio, print or cellular) so that more viewers could benefit from its news services.

How do you fit two giants in one page?

Most of us have trouble fitting into our pants, what more bringing two media giants into one site? But with Inq7.net, the country's most awarded network and the nation's leading newspaper come together to create the biggest online source of Philippine news and information. Get up-to-the-minute news updates, live streaming video/audio of ongoing news events plus the insights and integrity you've come to expect from GMA and the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Sounds amazing? Log on to www.inq7.net.

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DBP to save ₱10M a year with new IT system

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

THE DEVELOPMENT Bank of the Philippines (DBP) has signed a contract involving the revamp of its general ledger system, which is estimated to save the government-run bank at least P10 million every year.

Malaysian firm PK Tech Philippines Inc. bagged the P20-million project through subsidiary DBP Data Center Inc. (DCI), according to bank officials. DCI and PK Tech are engaged in several joint ventures, including the development of another solution called Treasury Trust system.

Antonio Co, PK Tech country manager, said PK Tech would help the government bank migrate its existing general ledger system to a more decentralized system.

"We're downsizing our systems which are currently running on mainframes to smaller systems which will be easier to manage," said Vicencio Macapagal, executive vice president of DBP and president of DCI.

The new system is expected to be up and running in nine months, according to PK Tech officials. The contract includes the purchase of computer hardware and software, as well as consulting services.

The general ledger system is considered the heart of banking because it stores all the records of the bank, according to Clarito Magsino, vice president of DBP. The new system will eventually interconnect remote branches via a secured telephone line or through the Internet.

Initially, PK Tech indicated that it would interconnect 10 out of 67 branches to the central office in Makati City within the year.

DBP is spending at least P150 million every year in an effort to make the government bank automated and connected.

"It is like a heart transplant. We're laying the groundwork for the bank's general ledger system once again," Magsino said.

SIGN OF THE TIMES?

Internet ad company closes in Brazil

SAO PAULO, Brazil—Less than a year after setting up in Brazil, Internet advertising company DoubleClick Inc. said it was closing its media sales operations here because of disappointing growth in online advertising.

Eric Stein, DoubleClick vice president, said the company was closing its media sales operations in Sao Paulo and Brazilian clients would be served through a telemarketing team at its New York headquarters. Media sales staff here numbered about 10, Stein said.

The company would maintain a presence by keeping a Sao Paulo-based team to serve clients' technology needs, Stein said.

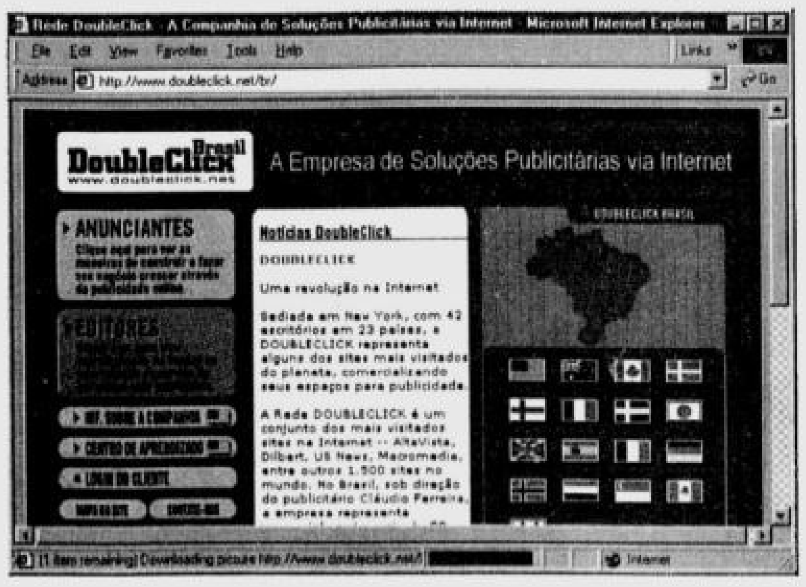
DoubleClick set up its Brazilian operation last April to serve about 50 clients. But Stein said "the growth is not coming as fast as we thought it would."

He said other important markets such as Mexico and Argentina were also served out of New York, as was Brazil before last April.

Brazil is by far South America's biggest economy, with an annual Gross Domestic Product of about $500 billion. But only about 8 percent of its 170 million people have regular access to the Internet.

Although Internet use is growing, advertisers have been loathe to migrate from television, the country's highest penetrating medium.

DoubleClick electronically inserts advertisements on behalf of online advertisers on more than 1,500 websites. It operates in 23 markets and has already slashed 150 employees in the United Satetes. *AP*


Rede DoubleClick - A Companhia de Soluções Publicitárias via Internet - Microsoft Internet Explorer

http://www.doubleclick.net/br/

A Empresa de Soluções Publicitárias via Internet

Notícias DoubleClick

Uma revolução na Internet

Sediada em New York, com 42 escritórios em 23 países, a DOUBLECLICK representa alguns dos sites mais visitados do planeta, comercializando seus espaços para publicidade.

A Rede DOUBLECLICK é um conjunto dos mais visitados sites na Internet -- AltaVista, Dilbert, US News, Macromedia, entre outros 1.500 sites no mundo. No Brasil, sob direção do publicitário Cláudio Ferreira, a empresa representa

THE BRAZIL website is still up, but sales are down

PIMENTEL

Nene says 'No' to text message, electronic mail censorship

BY JOEY G. ALARILLA

SENATE President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that he would oppose congressional moves to censor content on mobile phone text messages and e-mail.

Pimentel said the "hate campaign" messages in these media are not enough reason to curb technological progress, according to a radio report. These messages are circulating through mobile phones via SMS (short message service) and on the Internet via e-mail.

Some senators who voted against the opening of the second sealed envelope during the Estrada impeachment trial have complained about the text-message "hate campaign" against them. Senators Vicente Sotto III and Robert Jaworski even summoned officials of the country's top cellular phone service operators, Globe Telecom and Smart Communications, to explain why they should not be held responsible for offensive material circulating through their networks.

Pimentel stressed that there are many laws protecting individuals from malicious and erroneous information on mobile phones and the Internet, and so there is no need to push for censorship.

Pimentel was one of 10 senators who voted "Yes" to the move to open the second sealed bank envelope in the Estrada impeachment trial, and announced his resignation when it was clear that the "No" votes would win.

Filipino from Silicon Valley wants to boost local dotcoms

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

VICTOR Tayao, a 37-year-old Filipino entrepreneur who has worked in Silicon Valley for the last five years, is not in the Philippines to recruit brilliant programmers. He is here to bet his money on local startups.

He believes that his experiences in the roller-coaster world of the US dotcoms would serve as good lessons for the country's own struggling technopreneurs.

"I'll be happy to start at least two to four firms which will cater to vertical markets," Tayao said during an interview. He is currently on the lookout for local partners, specifically those engaged in the business of "adding value to broadband services."

He is also drawing up plans for a technopreneur forum, where he can share his ideas about starting up.

TAYAO

"I see a lot of talent in the Philippines. It should be matched up with good management," Tayao said. He stressed, however, that he is not exactly a venture capitalist.

"Venture capitalists would often want 40 percent of the upstarts they intend to support," he said.

Tayao indicated, though, that he is willing to invest $25,000 to $100,000 of his money to firms that he would set up in the Philippines.

"I plan to set up the companies in a year. By that time, these core firms will focus on being good. The next step would be selling services overseas," he said.

Tayao said that he is currently setting up a local firm that would be engaged in "directed news," also known as e-marketing. Considering that he wants to invest on value-added broadband services, he said that the unidentified firm would delve on the business of delivering multimedia content—including streaming video—via e-mail directly to subscribers.

"I envisioned working with broadband firms," he added. He also said that the local company would earn revenue by reselling content culled from various services offered by traditional media and other brick-and-mortar firms.

"The projected spending on directed news is about $6 billion worldwide in 2001," he said.

Tayao is founder of Axean Group. The company is into information technology management and consulting services. The company currently employs 58 people, and, as of 1999, has recorded total revenues of $12 million, according to Bay Area magazine Business Times.

The company was ranked the sixth fastest growing private company in the Bay Area by the same magazine in 1999. From revenues of $1.13 million in 1996, the company's revenues grew to $11 million. Tayao started the company with only $175,000—mostly from personal savings.

ICT to create jobs, says Gloria

THE INFORMATION and communications technology (ICT) industry is government's best bet to create more jobs for Filipinos, according to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Responding to a question on how the government intends to solve unemployment in the Philippines, Ms Macapagal said that her administration intends to use ICT to bring about productivity in the country as it competes in the global economy.

"That is the reason I'm pushing for ICT as key to the growth of the country in the 21st century because this is where the high-paying jobs are," she said.

"We should not only look at ICT as a product but as a means to increase productivity. If we don't do this, we won't be able to address the dilemma of creating more jobs and addressing the clamor for higher minimum wages," Ms Macapagal said in an open forum after addressing the country's major business groups.

Attending the meeting were members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc., Philippine Exporters Confederation and Employers Confederation of the Philippines.

Ms Macapagal's statement is consistent with the prevailing objective of the Information Technology and E-Commerce Council (ITECC), which is to make the Philippines the e-services hub in Asia. ITECC is currently the highest policymaking body on ICT matters. Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II heads the council. *Erwin G. Oliva*

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It's still . . .

(From page B16)

nical mostly, such as the number of kilobytes that can be accommodated per page. We want the downloading of pages to be easy. At the same time, we want to put in enough meat in the story to make it worth your while to read. As such, a new writing style for the Web is evolving—no fuss, straight to the point, all news.

- Journalists in the old media usually came to work in the afternoon and stayed late into the evening. With the demands of online news, changing shifts are a necessity. Our morning people get to do mostly the Breaking News, while the workers in the late evening shift take on the job of processing material from the Inquirer News Service. With the further growth of INQ7.net, we foresee a 24-hour news operation that will rival some of the top news sites in the world.
- In old media, when errors are committed, you print a correction the following day. We have a bigger advantage in the Web. When we spot an error, a typo, misspelling or whatever it is that needs changing, we can correct it right away. Minimal damage.

The advances in computer technology have made possible this new journalism on the Web. Still, these changes won't amount to much if the people behind it are not grounded on what is good journalism. The Internet may be our new playing field, but this is still a news organization. We follow the cardinal rules of honesty and accuracy, editorial integrity and sense of fair play. While we continue to embrace the new technology that makes our work faster and easier, we will ensure that the human element predominates. The medium may be different, but it is still news that matters.

The author is managing editor of Inquirer Interactive Inc. She is also the only rose in the thorny area at INQ7.net known as the editorial newsroom.

The success of today's businesses lie in their ability to focus their organization's systems into one direction–e-Business. As companies put in place e-Business strategies, they will see the need to integrate their existing applications with the Internet. How does one know if its internal processing is ready for e-Business? What is needed to ensure success?

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ARIES ESPINOSA, Asst. Editor

CNN Financial News cites Smart's text technology

SMART Communications Inc. was cited for using text messaging technology to provide affordable and efficient wireless services in a recent feature by the Cable News Network Financial News (CNN FN).

According to CNN, Smart has maximized the use of text messaging technology to provide innovative Internet-type data and services for mobile phone users.

The report also said that with these services, there is no need to wait for the latest mobile technology to access wireless services in the Philippines because of the wide availability of text messaging services.

"Text is the most rudimentary form of data. It makes use of existing platforms and therefore becomes quite affordable," said Napoleon Nazareno, Smart president and CEO in the CNN interview.

The report briefly discussed Smart's new services particularly Smart Zed, the mobile portal for personalized services, and Smart money, the first electronic cash card linked to a mobile phone. It also featured SmartTalk, the country's first GSM payphone that allows the user not only to make the usual calls but to send text messages as well.

Also interviewed for the CNN report was Credit Lyonnais financial analyst Louis Hilado who said that Smart was able to build its market share from less than 5 percent in 1999 to over 40 percent last year, a feat that can be credited to the success of messaging and the company's aggressive marketing strategy.

"Anything text-based will appeal to Filipinos," Hilado was quoted as saying.

PANA
1ST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

PANA INDUCTION

Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas (left) inducts to office the 2001 officers and directors of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA) at The Manila Hotel recently. The PANA officers are: president Angelica P. Suiza of Golden ABC Inc., vice president Susie Achacoso-Cruz of Godiva Inc., secretary Gigi B. Rodriguez of Citibank N.A., director Catherine A. Vergara of Schering-Plough Corporation, treasurer A.G. Alcantara Jr. of Asia Brewery, Inc., auditor Cergen D. Go of Swedish Match Philippines, PRO Jojo L. Samson of McDonalds Philippines, director Atoy D. Babasa of Andreson's Group and director Nestor B. Nisperos of Cable Technology Asia Corporation.

Matimco to open showroom in Alabang

MATIMCO Incorporated, a premier wood processing and distribution firm will open its latest showroom at the fourth floor of Festival Supermall, Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, Muntinlupa on Feb. 27.

In a bid to provide convenience and excellent customer service to its customers from the southern areas of Laguna, Cavite, Tagaytay and Batangas, Matimco showcases at the Alabang showroom the beautiful applications of its kiln dried and machine-finished wood products such as flooring, paneling, moulding, finger-jointed and laminated wood, stair components, panel boards, doors, door jambs, and its specially vacuum-treated with Solignum line of Matwood products for homes, offices and shops.

Matimco's other showrooms are located at Anson's Arcade in Makati City, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City and in Mandaue City, Cebu. Product consultants are available in all showrooms to provide assistance and information to customers.

For more information about the new Matimco Alabang showroom, call 842-1706 or 850-3517 to 32.

TURNOVER OF PROCEEDS

Enchanted Kingdom president and CEO Mario Mamon turns over proceeds of the park's "Change For Good" fund-raising drive to Kythe Inc. president Dr. Victoria Abesamis during the closing ceremonies of the park's year-long celebration of the International Year of the Carousel. The beneficiary, Kytwe, Inc., is a non-stock, non-profit organization that addresses psychological needs of pediatric cancer patients and their families. With Mamon and Abesamis are (from left) Enchanted Kingdom's AVP for marketing Dennis Cruz, EK adprom manager Je Villmayor, Kyteh executive director Girlie Garcia and Kythe special projects officer Tina Puno.

Friskies Alpo launches '102 Dalmatians' promo

FRISKIES Alpo Dog Food proudly brings Disney's "102 Dalmatians" to the Philippines. The funny, poignant, action-packed movie picks up where "101 Dalmatians" left off and begins when a totally reformed Cruella DeVil (played by Glenn Close) was released from prison.

In line with the celebration, Friskies Alpo Dog Food launches an equally exciting "102 Dalmatians" promo. For every purchase of any 3-kilogram bag of Alpo Digestion Plus, you get a free cuddly "102 Dalmatians" plush toy. Choose from Oddball (the youngest and newest addition to the family), Domino, Dipstick, Dottie and Little Dipper. Complete the whole "102 Dalmatians" plush toy collection. Or get a beautifully crafted "102 Dalmatians" dog bowl for every purchase of an 8-kilogram bag of Alpo Digestion Plus. The bowl is a collector's item you and your pet will love and cherish.

All items are available in the following supermarkets – all SM supermarkets in Manila; Cherry Foodarama; Robinson's Galleria and Ermita; Landmark; South Alabang; Shopwise Alabang and Vito Cruz; Makati Supermarket Alabang; Rustan's Harrison, Cubao and Shangri-La; Uni-Mart; Cash and Carry; Parco Supermarket; and Hi-Top. Offer is good until March 9, 2001. For more details, check out posters and the official Alpo "102 Dalmatians" website www.alpo102.com.

CASH
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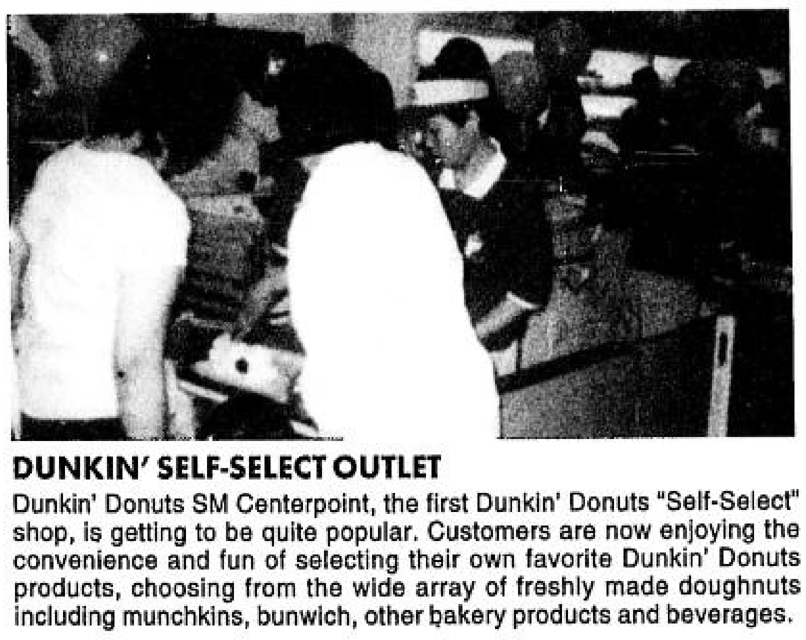
The country's foremost local air courier company, LBC Express, recently celebrated its 50th year by giving its customers a chance to win three house-and-lot prizes, LBC Bank start-up accounts worth P25,000, one Kawasaki motorcycle and more. One of the winners, Frederick Blasco (left) receives his check of P25,000 from Javy Mantecon, VP for marketing.

A LIGHT FOR A LIFE PROJECT

Philips president and CEO Pratt Hsu (right) poses with Caritas Manila deputy director Rev. Father Antonio Cecilio Pascual and a differently-abled child during his visit and turnover of the company's donation to Caritas from its "A Light for a Life" project. "A Light for a Life" is a fund raising drive among Philips employees and suppliers which aimed to raise substantial funds for Caritas Manila's youth education programs, namely Bukid Kabataan and the Educational Assistance Program.



DUNKIN' SELF-SELECT OUTLET

Dunkin' Donuts SM Centerpoint, the first Dunkin' Donuts "Self-Select" shop, is getting to be quite popular. Customers are now enjoying the convenience and fun of selecting their own favorite Dunkin' Donuts products, choosing from the wide array of freshly made doughnuts including munchkins, bunwich, other bakery products and beverages.

Clips

Education seminar change of venue

DUE to the fire that razed the Philippine International Convention Center, the venue of the second national education conference on the theme "Creating an Enhanced Learning Environment Through Individual Learning Styles" sponsored by the Center for Learning and Teaching Styles, Philippines, scheduled March 1 and 2, has been moved to the Philippine Trade Training Center located at Roxas Blvd., cor. Buendia, Pasay City. Registration begins at 7 a.m. For more details, call 374-4967, 631-6535 or 931-6276.

New CFO for FBDC

LIM

FORT Bonifacio Development Corporation announces the promotion of Jose Ma. K. Lim as first vice president and chief financial officer. Prior to this promotion, he was vice president for treasury of the company.

In his now position, Lim will be responsible for the management of the financial affairs of the company, handling the management of the treasury and book requirements as well as the company's financing investments and capital needs. Lim's promotion followed after the retirement of Alfredo B. Parungao who served as senior vice president and chief financial officer of FBDC from March 17, 1997 to Jan. 2001.

PATLS general meeting set tomorrow

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Teachers of Library Science (PATLS) will hold the oathtaking ceremony of newly elected officers and general assembly tomorrow at the Azotea de Monzon, Manuel Luis Quezon University, R. Hidalgo, Quiapo, Manila. For details, call Edna at 731-3034, Helen at 735-8508 or Amy at 735-9406.

Mary Kay's super women

The "super Filipina" took centerstage last January when Mary Kay Philippines held its first Manila Career Conference where the theme "Superwomen in 2001" was launched to challenge consultants to take bolder goals and overcome challenges. The event kicked off with a parade and presentation of the 21 Filipino sales director followed by group presentations, launching of new sales programs and awarding of certificates and prizes to excellent consultants. The highlight of the event was the graduation of the Red Jacket University participants and the debut of eight new sales director.

AYALA LIFE
6th APLIC - Bangkok
May 4-7, 2001

SALES RALLY

Ayala Life Assurance Inc. (ALAI) recently held a sales rally to coincide with the grand launch of their newest range of insurance services namely, Access, Aspire, Advance, Acquire and Achieve, all of which are ideally designed to suit the needs of every Filipino family. The event gathered ALAI's top business partners from Northern Luzon, South Luzon, North Metro and South Metro who qualified in ALAI's incentive program for a free trip to Bangkok, Thailand. Photo shows Ayala Insurance Companies president Alfonso L. Salcedo Jr. (center) with ALAI's top business partners.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS AND PR CONSULTANTS

Please address your press/photo releases to People, Events & Products Assistant Editor Aries B. Espinosa.

PROMO WINNER

Concepcion Robles (second from right), winner of the Nestle-Rustan promo receives the symbolic key to her brand new Ford 1.6L GSI from (from left) Dottie Capunitan, category manager of Nestle Phils.; Emi Palacios, branch manager of Rustan Harrison Plaza; Mary Ann Ducanes, Rustan Supermarket advertising and promotions manager; and Mike Tanchanco, Nestle Phis. key accounts specialist.

Celebrating Twenty - Five

BOOK LAUNCHING

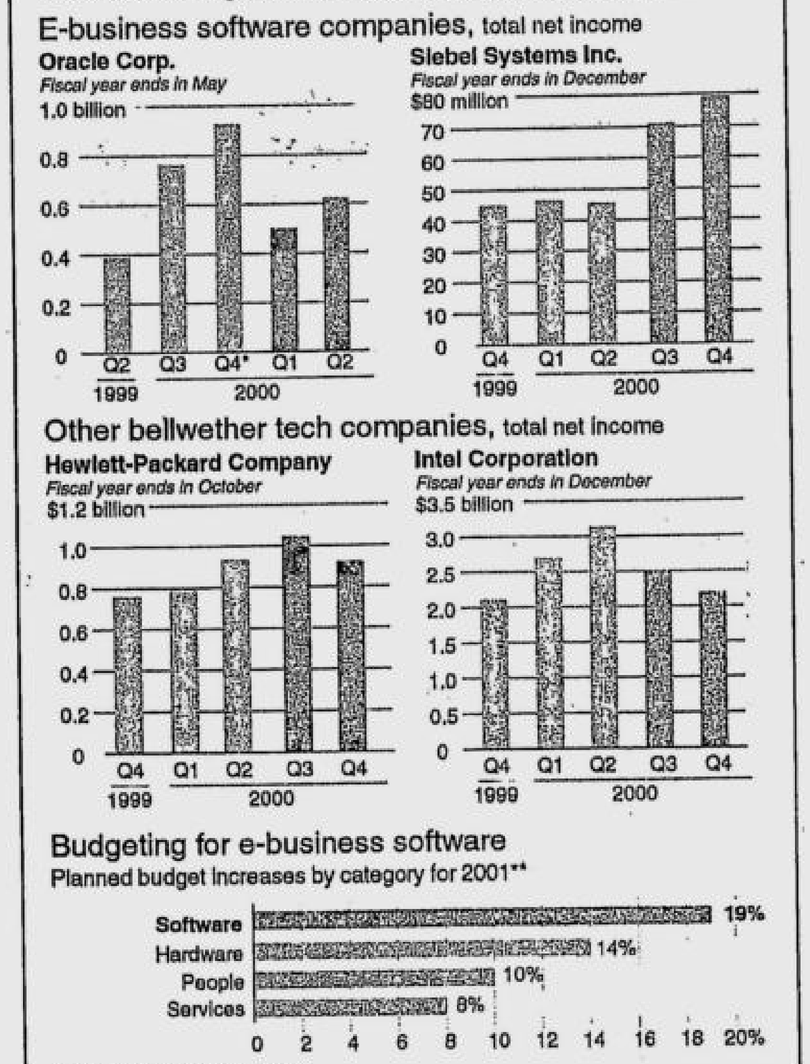
The commemorative book titled "Ugnayan ng Lahi" was recently launched at the CCP Main Theater lobby. The book is about the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relationship between the Philippines and China. The Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (FFCCCII) extended total financial support for the publication of the commemorative book which will be distributed to various libraries in the Philippines. Seen at the book launch are (from left) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Assistant Secretary Willy Gaa assisting DFA Acting Secretary Lauro Baja, Jr. in presenting the commemorative book to PROC Ambassador Wang Chungui while FFCCCII president, Dr. Lucio Tan looks on.

HARVEST TIME

Figaro Coffee Club members catch the last wave of the coffee harvest season in Lipa, Batangas, birthplace of the coffee industry in the Philippines. Shown are the club members visiting Col. "Kathy" Katigbak's farm in Tipakan, Lipa Batangas. Those interested to join these annual tours may log on to www.figarocoffee.com or visit any Figaro coffee shop for more information.

Turning to e-business software

While many companies in the technology industry brace for a lackluster year, e-business software companies are riding a wave of increasing prosperity. A recent survey found that businesses looking to lower their overhead are turning to the automation that e-business software provides.



*Excludes investment gains.

**Figures are based on a worldwide survey taken during the first two weeks of December by Merrill Lynch.

SOURCES: Hoovers Online; Merrill Lynch

Wm. J. Castello/AP

US earnings warnings mount; markets sour

NEW YORK—A new batch of corporate icons warning of disappointing results ahead have put US markets in a sour mood and left little room for optimism in the near future.

Some 490 companies so far have put out first-quarter forecasts and almost two-thirds, or 321, of them have warned of lower-than-expected earnings, according to market research firm First Call/Thomson Financial.

"The earnings slowdown have been worse than expected, and I think there is plenty of more warnings to come," said Michael Cohen, co-fund manager for the Alpha Analytics Digital Future Fund. "There are a lot of companies that look like they'll have to warn."

The number of warnings this quarter is almost exactly the same as this time last quarter, when 324 companies warned. But it's almost seven times the number this time a year ago, when the US economy was zooming along.

That's different now, as a slowing economy is hurting demand for goods and services. Another reason for the skyrocketing number of warnings is Regulation FD, a new law that requires companies to widely disseminate material information about their business prospects.

"It definitely looks pretty heavy right now, and I suspect it's going to be very heavy until at least the end of March or early April," said Joseph Kalinowski, equity strategist at First Call/Thomson Financial.

Network computer maker Sun Microsystems warned late Thursday that a slowdown in capital spending had hit US demand and lowered its sales and profit targets for the current third fiscal quarter.

Other warnings last week included wireless communications equipment maker Motorola Inc.; high-end retailer Nordstrom Inc.; the nation's No. 1 furniture maker Furniture Brands International Inc.; analytical instrument maker Thermo Electron Corp.; drug store operator Duane Reade Inc.; energy services and construction company McDermott International Inc. and Teledyne Technologies Inc., a maker of electronics, communications products and aerospace engines.

"When companies can send out bad news, and the stock price doesn't fall, that's when you know we have hit the bottom," Cohen said. "But we haven't reached that point yet." *Reuters*

Central bankers discuss e-commerce at NY Fed

NEW YORK—International central bankers on Friday discussed how greater use of the Internet might affect monetary policy but said no definitive conclusions had been reached.

Takashi Oyama, an advisor at the Bank of Japan, told a conference that more widespread use of electronic payment options may soon force nations to reconfigure national statistics that are instrumental to formulating policies.

"One implication for monetary policy is that we'll have more difficulties defining and compiling accurate price indices," he said at a conference about financial e-commerce held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Because the Internet may create opportunities for arbitrage, Oyama also said the concentration of e-business "might hamper transmission of central bank policies."

Meanwhile central bankers also discussed the possible risks of using new technologies in trading currencies and fixed income products.

While many institutions praise the expected savings electronic trading platforms may provide, some bankers underscored the dangers of relying solely on one system.

Many international banks, including Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, Credit Suisse First Boston and Goldman Sachs have joined forces to create online trading platforms like the one called Fxall in efforts to improve their competitiveness in changing business conditions.

Jos Heuvelman, a director at Dutch central bank De Nederlandsche Bank said "in the old days no single element was so important that if it broke, the functioning of the entire system could be in trouble. Now (with one platform) that is different." *Reuters*

Scandal-hit Mitsubishi hopes for turnaround

TOKYO—Rolf Eckrodt, the chief operating officer sent by DaimlerChrysler AG last month to help fix Mitsubishi Motors Corp., made a point of handing out to the Japanese executives little pieces of the Berlin Wall.

The souvenirs from Germany, Eckrodt said, symbolized his hope for cross-cultural unity and his determination to "leave no stone unturned."

He will likely need both—and probably some luck as well in his effort to lead a turnaround at the automaker struggling to restore its credibility after acknowledging a 20-year cover-up of driver complaints last summer.

Mitsubishi Motors is announcing a reform plan Monday—the same day DaimlerChrysler, which owns 34 percent of Mitsubishi Motors, lays out a plan to put Chrysler back on track.

Analysts say Mitsubishi Motors would need to trim its 65,000-person workforce, likely closing a plant, if it hopes for recovery—various reports have put the number of job cuts as high as 8,000. Chrysler has already said it will slash 26,000 jobs, or one-fifth of its workers, over the next three years.

Besides the need for cost-cutting and a streamlined car lineup, Mitsubishi Motors faces problems of a far more serious kind for an automaker: dubious quality control and eroding consumer trust.

Japanese were stunned last summer when Mitsubishi Motors acknowledged it had been systematically hiding thousands of complaints about possible auto defects for more than 20 years. *AP*

TECH BUST

No bottom in sight for Nasdaq

NEW YORK—As the Nasdaq composite plunged to its lowest point in more than two years last week, Wall Street is again wondering when the tech-laden index will finally reach bottom.

The consensus: The worst isn't over and this bear stock market isn't going away soon.

"We are in a major bear market," said Ricky Harrington, a technical analyst for Wachovia Securities.

Although the Nasdaq this past week fell 162.87 points to end at 2,262.51—and fell all the way to 2,156.29 before rebounding slightly Friday to finish up 17.55—the feeling on Wall Street was it still hadn't hit bottom.

"I know there are a ton of people out there that continue to say, 'We're getting close. We're getting close.' I just have to say I don't think so," said Gary Kaltbaum, a technical analyst for JW Genesis.

"I'm a big believer in reality and letting the market talk and I think it has a very loud voice here," Kaltbaum added. "I don't see anything that shows it's going to turn around."

While the Nasdaq has taken the biggest beating, the other major market indexes also are suffering. The Dow Jones industrial average and the Standard & Poor's 500 index are also in negative territory for the year. Many big name stocks, such as Intel Corp., one of the Dow's tech components, and Cisco Systems Inc., are trading at less than half of their 52-week highs.

"That type of damage doesn't turn around quickly," Kaltbaum said.

Analysts like Kaltbaum and Harrington, who have been bearish about the market for months, are getting more company on Wall Street. The most recent evidence came Friday when analysts at Credit Suisse First Boston and Lehman Brothers slashed their yearly outlooks for the major market indexes.

Credit Suisse cut its yearend target for the Nasdaq to 3,000 from 4,000. It reduced the Dow to 12,000 from 12,650, and the S&P to 1,520 from 1,600. Meanwhile, Lehman reduced its estimates for the Dow to 12,500 from 13,000 and for the S&P to 1,600 from 1,675.

Both brokerages said the reasons for their cuts were ongoing market slide and the likelihood that earnings would not improve as quickly as the market had thought.

The reduced outlooks were "a good sign," said Arthur Hogan, chief market analyst at Jefferies & Co.

"As soon as everybody throws in the towel, that's when we'll know we reached the bottom," Hogan said.

The market for a while, however, has been fooling analysts and investors into thinking it's bottomed out. Several analysts have erred in heralding each bottom the Nasdaq has hit in the past year—and there have been about five—as being "the bottom."

Likewise, some also predicted that recent rallies would lead to a more lasting recovery for the market. But so far, the market has slipped up analysts and investors by staging false bottoms and false rallies.

Consider last month when Wall Street sent stocks higher after the Federal Reserve made two interest rate cuts. Analysts and investors then hoped earnings and the economy would soon pick up. The Nasdaq climbed nearly 25 percent after the first cut, and was still up about 20 percent after the second. *AP*

Fed seen buying municipal bonds within next 2 years

NEW YORK—Merrill Lynch & Co. expects the Federal Reserve will ask the US Congress for permission to buy long-term municipal bonds for use in open market operations this year or next, according to a research report.

The report also indicates the Fed is considering just purchasing "better credits"—or the debt of higher-rated and therefore better-managed states—and called the idea "problematic politically."

On Feb. 13, Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan said as the supply of US Treasury debt fell, the central bank was looking for alternatives for its day-to-day administration of monetary policy, including bonds from US states and foreign governments.

Up until now, the trading desk at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which conducts open market operations, has used mortgage-backed securities from US agencies like Fannie Mae as an alternative to Treasury bonds.

Recent surplus projections mean Treasury debt could be eliminated in less than a decade, which would require a complete overhaul of how the Fed adjusts bank reserves to keep the financial markets humming.

"The (Federal Open Market Committee) asked the staff to explore the possible mechanisms for backing our usual repurchase operations with the collateral of certain debt obligations of US states and foreign governments," Greenspan said in testimony before the Senate Banking Committee.

The Merrill Lynch report, written by senior government strategist Gerald Lucas and senior municipal strategist Philip Fischer, noted that the Fed is only allowed to purchase short-term municipal securities with maturities of six months and shorter.

Previously, Fischer told Reuters the Fed has been discussing the idea with Merrill Lynch officials on and off for the last year.

The Merrill team does not see Congress stepping in the way of the Fed, given that Fed purchases of state debts would lead to lower interest rates on state borrowings.

At the same time, because state general obligation bonds only make up 10 percent of issuance, available supply could become a problem.

Nevertheless, purchasing state municipal bonds, "would also serve the 'social good' for the country, an important consideration for the Fed," the report said. *Reuters*

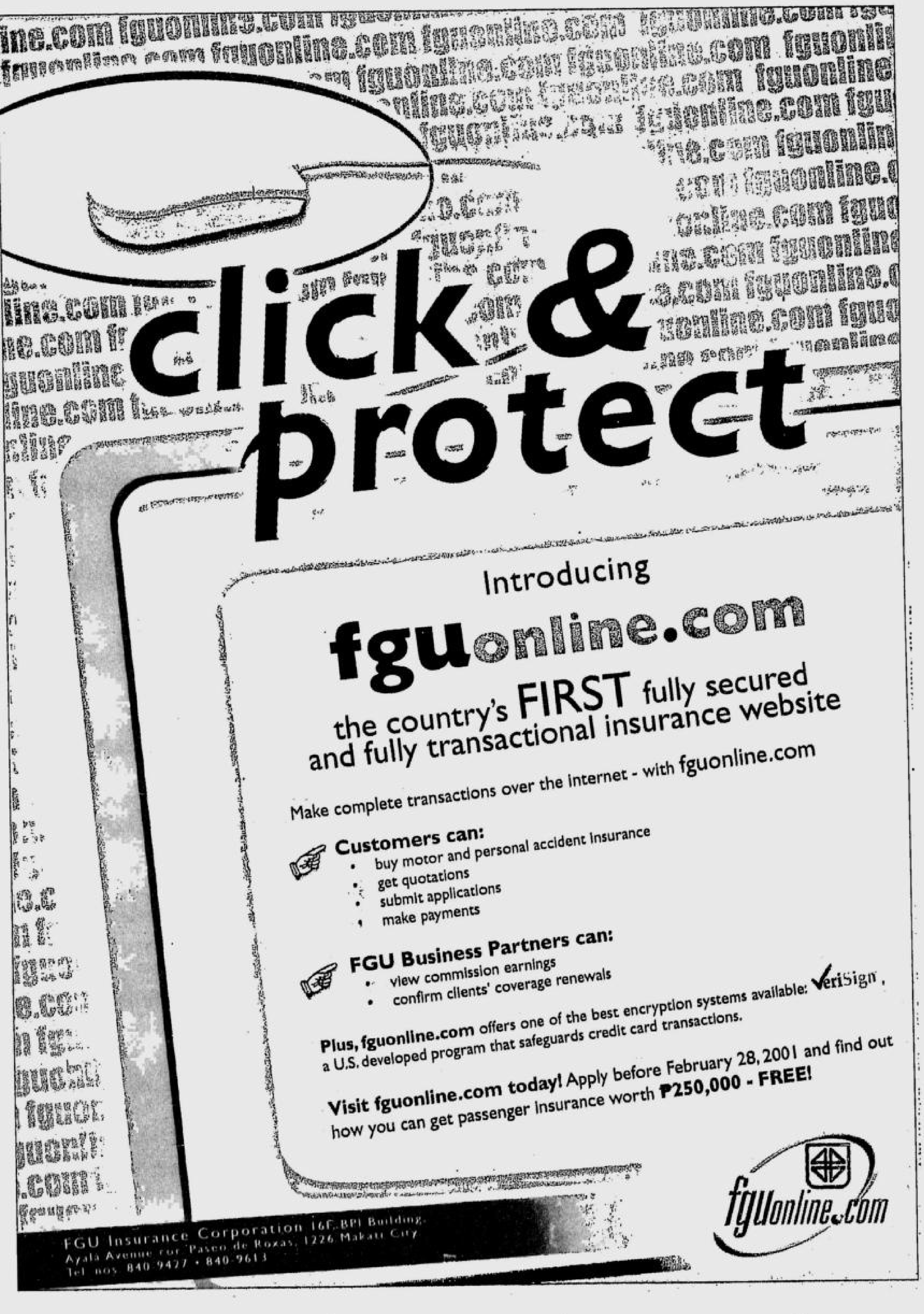
Unionists hunt fallen Daewoo boss

ROISSY—Three South Korean trade unionists arrived in Paris late Friday to track down fugitive Daewoo group founder Kim Woo-Choong, who was wanted for a multibillion-dollar fraud and embezzlement.

Upon their arrival at Paris' Roissy airport, Hwang I Min, Yu Man Hyung and Park Jum Kyn, wearing red headbands inscribed in Korean, and yellow tabards with slogans in French: "Arrest Kim Kim Woo-Chong, no to economic layoffs."

The 65-year-old Kim left South Korea just over a year ago for a meeting in China and has not been seen since.

With thousands of Daewoo workers thrown out of jobs since the collapse of the group in July 1999 with $80 billion of debt, many are bitter at the slow pace of the official investigation into Kim, who was once hailed as a key architect of South Korea's economic miracle. *AFP*



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PREFERRED DUTIES

Palace reviews Ford SUV tax perks

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG is currently reviewing an application by Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc. to bring in 2,000 semi-knocked down units of its compact sport-utility vehicle, Ford Escape, at preferred duties.

A source said Ford cited Malacañang's endorsement of Daimler-Chrysler Corp.'s application to import 7,000 SKD units of Chrysler sport-utilities and pickup trucks over the next three years as justification for seeking the same accommodation.

Ford, which hurriedly left the Philippines at the height of the economic crisis in the 1980s, is optimistic it will get a favorable response from the Macapagal administration considering the red carpet treatment it got from the Ramos administration.

Ford was the first domestic-oriented company allowed to obtain lavish fiscal perks previously reserved only for export-oriented firms located at economic zones.

If approved, Ford would gain an undue tariff advantage over Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. and GM Philippines Inc., which were levied full duties on their compact sport-utilities—Toyota's Rav-4 and GM's Subaru Forester—because these were brought in as completely built-up units.

Although an SKD unit is virtually a fully assembled vehicle without tires and batteries, each pack is only charged a 3-percent to 10-percent duty compared to the 30 percent slapped on CBUs.

The tariff discount should allow Ford to jumpstart its entry into the rapidly growing compact sport-utility market as well as threaten Honda Cars Philippines Inc.'s dominance of this segment with its CR-V. Honda is the only compact sport-utility assembler in the country, which makes it eligible for tariff discounts by importing its units in completely knocked-down packs.

Japanese assemblers have questioned Malacañang's decision to exercise its prerogative to allow more SKD imports even though the Board of Investments has discontinued this scheme because it does not help local parts makers and drains the government's coffers due to foregone revenues on these luxury items—compact sport-utilities cost roughly P1 million each.

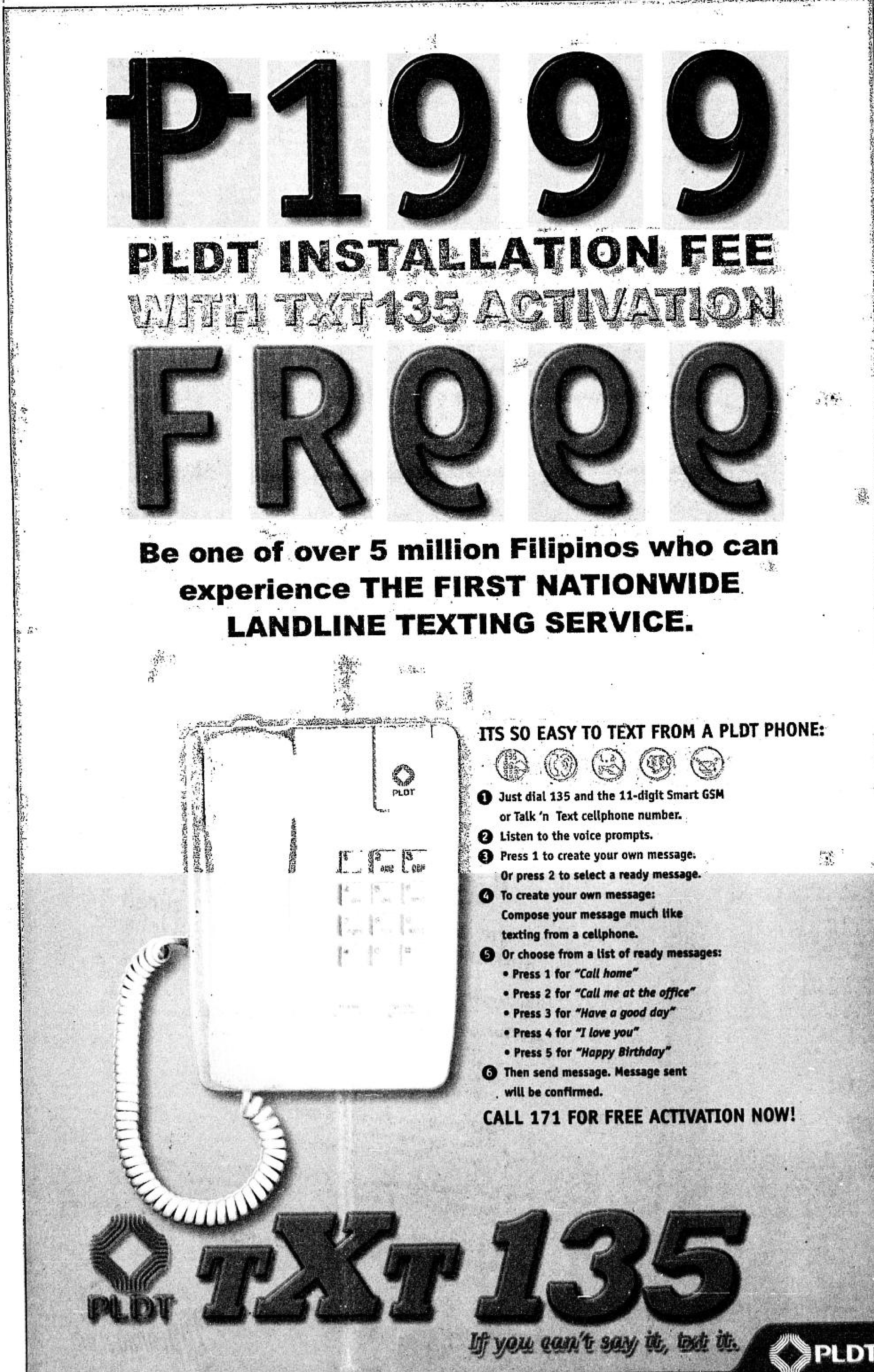
But Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II defended the SKD import licenses as a means of leveling the playing field.

Roxas said since all assemblers who re-entered the market in the late 1980s to early 1990 were allowed to import SKDs, there was no reason why other assemblers would not be granted the same privilege.

But in the past, the BOI agreed to give SKD licenses subject to stringent conditions as a stepping stone for assemblers planning more extensive assembly operations in the country. These SKD licenses were deemed necessary to develop the automotive market. But now that the industry has matured, Japanese assemblers see no pressing need for SKDs.

For Daimler-Chrysler's SKD license, the German-American carmaker was mandated to go to full automotive assembly using CKD units within 18 months, put up a guarantee for its committed net foreign exchange earnings, and provide a bond to cover for the discount it gets from the preferred duties.

Daimler-Chrysler, whose local partner is the Cebu-based Norkis Automotive Resources Corp., has committed to buy automotive parts from the country which it says will be worth more than the cost of its SKD imports.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New oil firms seen raking in ₱200M

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NEW oil companies may rake in a combined profit of P200 million this year.

This was the "fearless forecast" of Fernando Martinez, president of the New Petroleum Players Association, in an interview.

"The new players are building additional facilities, which make them more competitive," Martinez said.

Liquigaz Corp. and Pryce Gas Inc. lead the move by putting up new receiving stations for their liquefied petroleum gas operations in the Visayas and Mindanao.

The facilities will increase the firms' LPG storage capacity, which would help them increase their LPG market share of 30 percent.

Liquigaz's expansion plans would cost about P20 million while Pryce Gas' new terminal costs about P200 million to P300 million.

Martinez said the expansion of the new oil firms would increase their overall market share to 14 percent from the current 10 percent.

However, the official said the P200-million profit did not cover the firms' loss carry-over from previous years.

"The (losses) must be recovered so profits would be offset," he said.

Martinez also predicted that the new players would "hit real net profits" in 2002.

He added that the new oil firms have not taken in real net profit since the deregulation of the oil industry in 1998.

Meralco sees systems loss ratio at 11.4%

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE MANILA Electric Co. said its systems loss probably hit 11.4 percent last year, pulling down its bottom line by some P600 million.

Unaudited figures obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Meralco, the country's biggest distributor of electricity, might again exceed the 9.5-percent systems loss ceiling set for utility firms.

This means foregone revenues for Meralco because utility firms are no longer allowed to pass on to their customers losses due to pilferage and theft.

Meralco has been hoping to bring down its systems loss ratio to 10.5 percent for last year and 10.1 percent this year.

Meralco executive vice president for operations Jesus Francisco said in an interview that the company planned to bring down its systems loss ratio this year by improving its connections in industrial estates.

"Our systems loss arise from technical and non-technical-related problems that include overloaded wires and line inefficiencies in some franchise areas, and, of course, there has been that battle to reduce illegal connections caused by pilferers for more than 10 years," Francisco told the INQUIRER.

Francisco added that the delay in Meralco's power rate adjustments forced the company to cut back on its programmed capital expenditure of P8.5 billion for 2000 and made it more difficult to improve its network.

Napocor set to raise rates next month

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. is set to adjust its rates, setting off an increase that will likely hit end-users next month.

"We have made our computations and these showed that delaying it further would be tantamount to higher adjustments," Napocor president Jesus Alcordo said.

He said Napocor would adjust its rates on a staggered basis "and make sure that these will be hardly felt by consumers."

Napocor has been setting aside its power rate increases since August last year, when then President Joseph Estrada ordered the state-run power firm to indefinitely postpone any adjustments due to the political crisis hounding his administration.

Alcordo said Napocor's inability to adjust its rates despite the weakening peso and higher costs doubled the power firm's losses to P11.9 billion last year from a year earlier.

The peso's depreciation from 39 to a dollar last year to 56.50 last month has jacked up Napocor's losses from foreign exchange fluctuations by about P2 billion, Alcordo said. Napocor owes over $6.5 billion to the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

BUSINESS Monday

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

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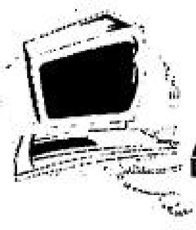

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Who will defend Fil-Chinese interests?

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THREE years ago, a disillusioned bunch of Chinese-Filipino businessmen decided to break away from the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce Inc. to form an organization which would truly represent their business interests sans the dirty politics.

From an initial 200 members, the Chinese-Filipino Business Club Inc.'s roster has swelled to 500 and it is now giving the 47-year-old FFCCI a run for its money as the true representative of their class. CFBI only accepts individual members compared to FFCCI's corporate membership policy.

While he may not be as well-known as his counterpart at FFCCI, taipan Lucio

WHO/ C4

TAN

GO

Using passages from the Bible in managing a bank

SIMPAO: Hardnosed Christian

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE is a passage in the Bible that talks about Moses gathering a group of able men to help him perform God's work, knowing that he cannot do the work all by himself.

Rafael F. Simpao Jr., president of Security Bank Corp., takes this passage to heart and has used it as a guide to managing the financial institution.

MANAGEMENT
STYLES

"I used to be a very hands-on kind of manager in the way that I run the bank, but I am changing my style to be more empowering because we have been able to recruit quite a number of senior people who will help do the bank's work," Simpao says.

He explains that empowering the staff is a great motivator as it emphasizes their worth in the organization. People also tend to work better when they know that they are given enough leeway to accomplish their tasks.

"What we do is that we agree on expectations on each side. We set our targets for the year and we have a review every month. Setting quantifiable targets is important so that the expectations are clear on both sides," Simpao says.

The officers and staff are consulted on setting targets and Simpao believes that it is his job as president to make sure that the officers are given enough resources to meet their targets.

"We also have an incentive system wherein they are given rewards if they meet their targets. We do this even at the branch level where we give out certificates and the proper recognition. I learned that being recognized for good work is very important to people," Simpao says.

He admits that he is quite new at openly expressing his appreciation toward people and even his family.

"I used to believe that as long as you do your job well, you will not hear from me. I was not a give-a-pat-on-the-back kind of person at one time," Simpao says.

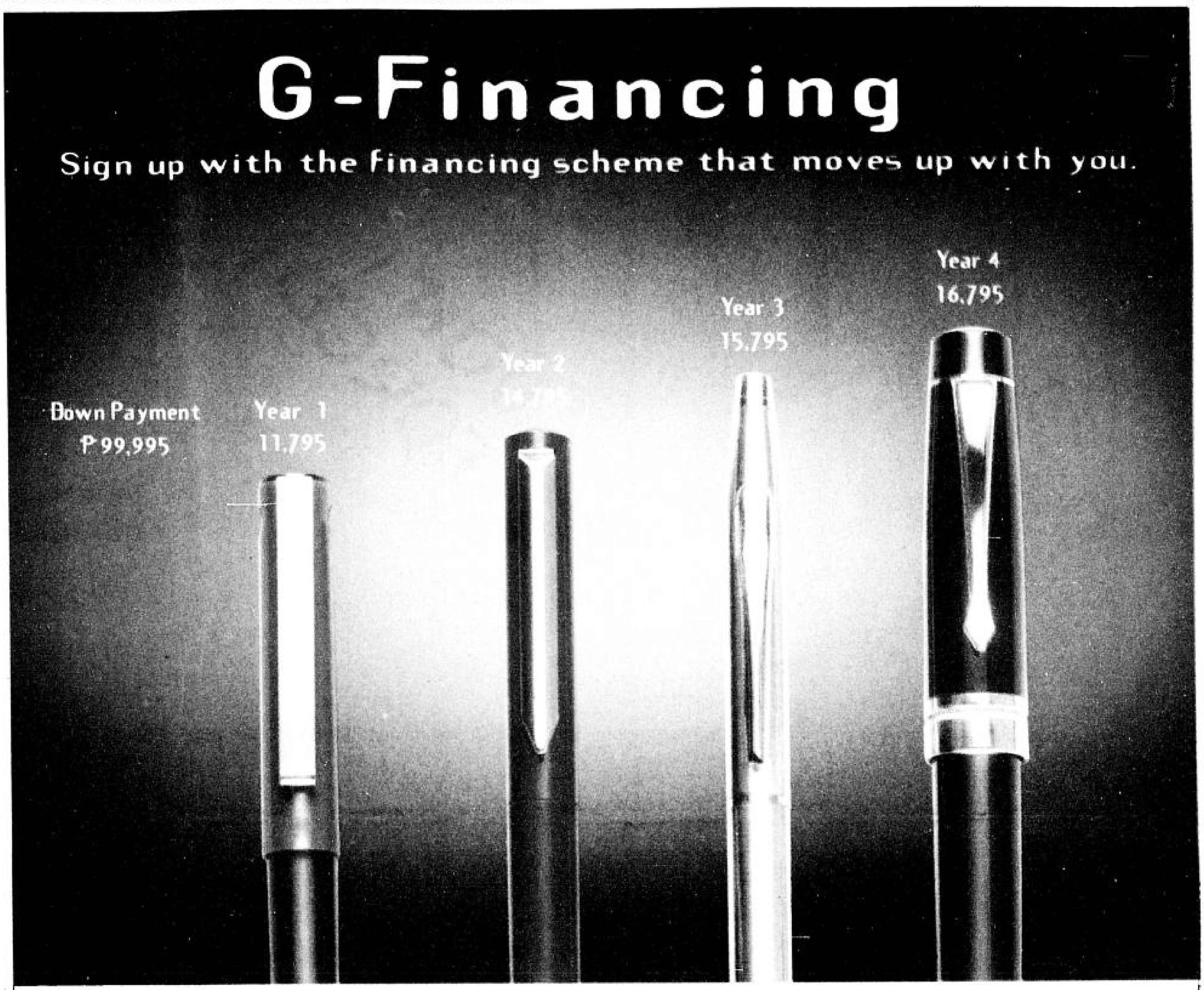
He became more open with his feelings when he became a Christian who bases his faith on the Bible. He realized that being physical like hugging his three children and his wife Melissa meant a great deal. This has also spilled to the way he treated colleagues in the business.

Being a Christian, however, does not mean that Simpao has become "soft" in the way he runs the bank. He says being a Christian and a hardnosed businessman do not necessarily conflict with each other.

"What is important is to know that you should work for the Lord. The Bible says that integrity is paramount and it suits us well because integrity is also paramount in financial institutions. Transparency is important," he stresses.

Simpao's efforts to adhere to the proper work ethic helped him go up the ranks in the banking industry. An economics graduate from the Ateneo de Manila University, Simpao first worked with investment bank Bancom Development Corp. By the time he left in 1981, he was senior vice president and head of credit, investment and treasury divisions.

USING/ C3



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Fallacies about government appointments

MAPping THE FUTURE

Cesar N. Sarino

OF LATE, there have been both positive and critical comments on the persons whom presidential successor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed to her Cabinet and key government offices. The popular clamor has been . . . "Do not appoint politicians. You do not owe them a favor. It is the people who placed you where you are now!"

The message is that politicians have no place in the new government, and in their stead should be appointed people from the NGOs, academe, business and industry, and other sectors of civil society. The criticism is that this has not taken place, and the government is once again dominated by politicians, or "trapos" as they are derisively called, and for this reason, the new government will not be any better than the one it replaced. The politicians have responded with accusations of sour-graping because those from civil society, especially those who actively participated during the Edsa rallies have not had what to them is their just share of the "spoils."

This hardly poses the kind of environment upon which Edsa II will build on to put the country back on track toward recovery and development. The fact of the matter is that no single aggrupation has monopoly of talent and the desire to serve. Lately, many of us have tended to label things as black or white . . . as in pro or anti, old or new, good or bad, without any shades or variations, even under very complex situations. Our levels of tolerance toward others who differ from us, in values, perceptions, even appearances, continue to be low and this is perhaps why we have always been a divided nation.

Perhaps I am somewhat digressing on the issue. The question I would like to pose is: Who should be appointed to key government positions, specially the Cabinet? Should these be the political party members, or should these be those coming from business, academe, NGOs or other sectors of civil society? This issue gets very confusing in the Philippines, because, a part of a muddled multi-political party system often characterized by turncoatism, there is a multitude of professionals/businessmen/and volunteer workers who find politicians disdainful but who refuse to enter the political mainstream, much less to affiliate as card-bearing party members.

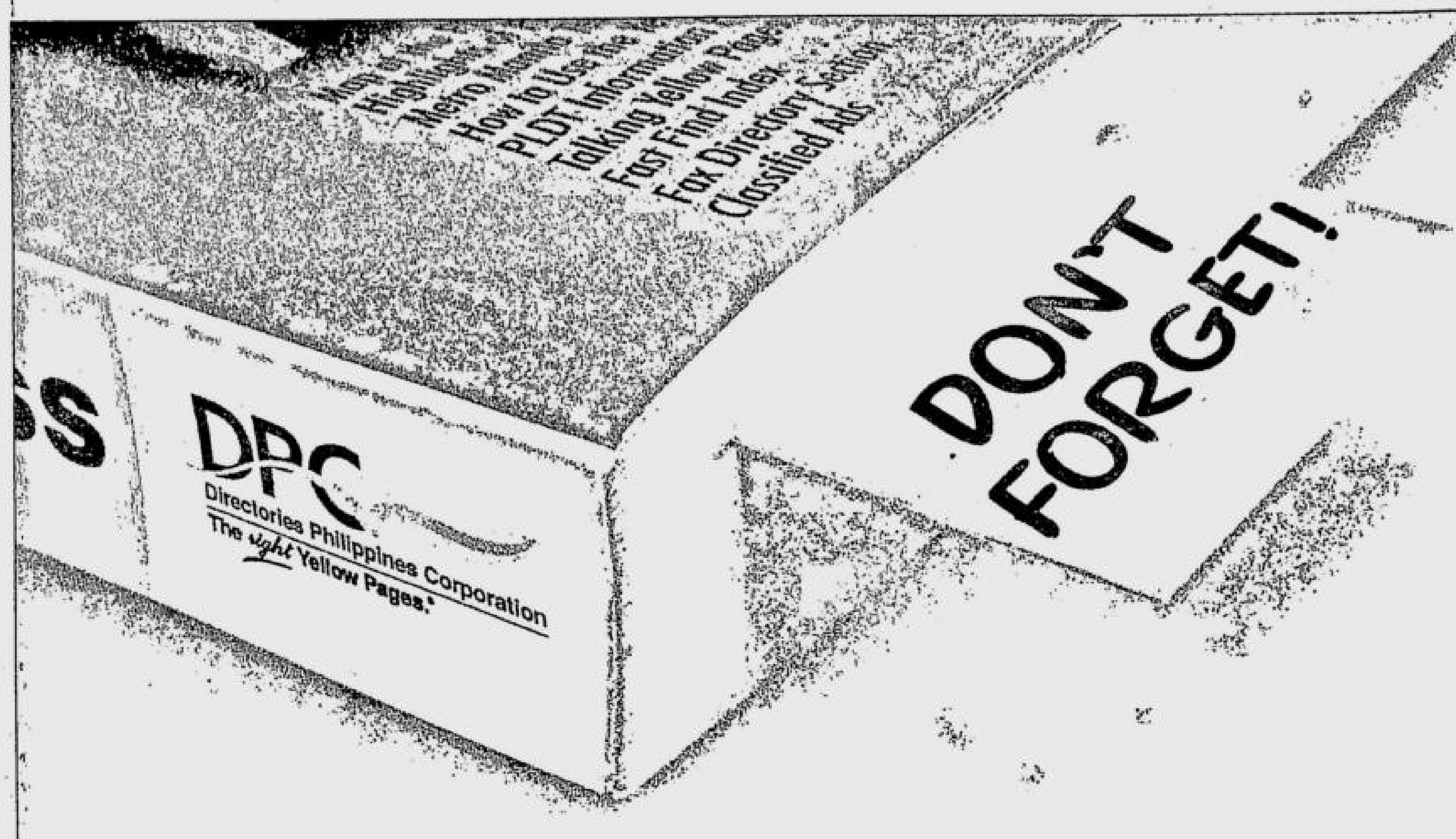
The premise seems popular in our country that priority to key positions in government should not be given to people with political party affiliations but to those coming from business/academe/civil society. In countries where the political system is developed, almost all are members of political parties. In the United States, for example, a person is either a Democrat or a Republican. When a new government takes over the helm, those appointed (whether coming from business, academe/civil society) expectedly will come from the same political party. In the Philippines, where politics is yet to mature, party affiliation is not popular for various reasons: the absence of party ideologies or platforms which facilitate turncoatism, the degradation of the dignity of elective offices by some politicians leading to the lack of motivation for potential leaders to enter into politics, and the expenses involved in the political exercise.

This explains why we have a limited pool of technically capable and experienced elected officials and card-bearing members from whom could be drawn acceptable persons to man key government positions. Other things being equal (integrity, competence, etc.), a member of a political party should perform better than a non-member because he belongs to a team bonded together by the party vision and goals for the country, and because he possesses the political skills necessary for effective public administration.

Likewise, in making decisions in government, it is not enough that these should be based on conventional management principles and practices. The decision must, first and foremost, consider the character and culture of the people, especially the poor, and therefore the straight line, which is shortest distance between two points is not always the most effective and efficient.

It must also be remembered by those in the private sector, particularly

FALLACIES/ C4



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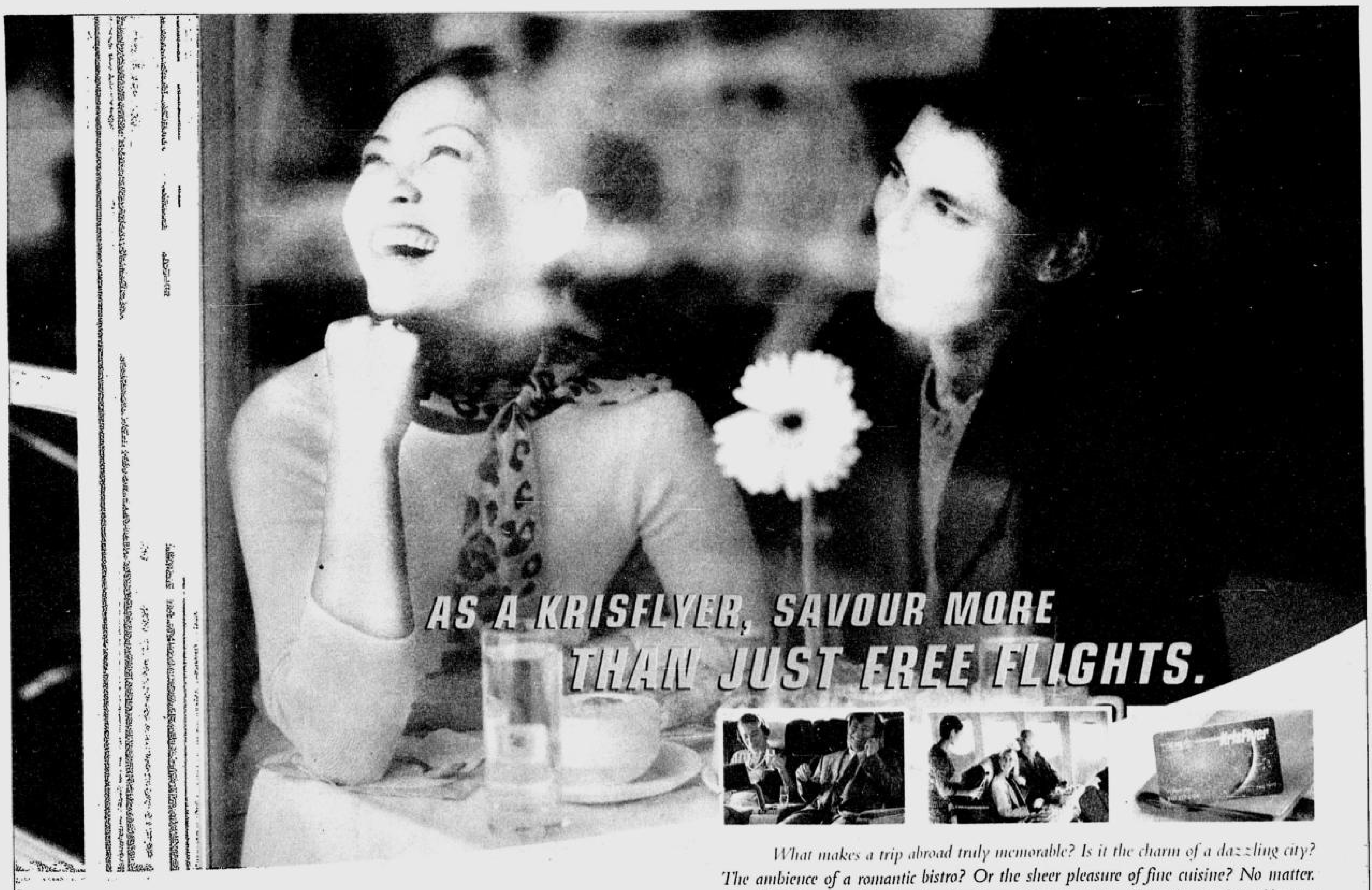
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Using passages from the Bible . . .

(From page C1)

He then moved to the Philippine National Construction Corp. where he last served as executive vice president and chief financial officer. He moved to Security Bank in 1985 initially as senior vice president and head of corporate banking group.

He was appointed president in 1995 and he concurrently represents the bank in affiliates and subsidiaries that include Diners Club World Travel Corp., SB International Services Inc. and Standard Insurance Co. Inc.

Simpao emphasizes these Biblical principles whenever he talks to employees of the bank. While other chief executive officers quote from business or management books, Simpao lifts from stories in the Bible to illustrate the qualities of a leader. He is very familiar with the appropriate passages in the Bible to emphasize his point, and he even conducts Bible studies in his spare time.

"What I am trying to practice is to be a hard-nosed businessman and a Christian at the same time. I emphasize on the proper work ethics and I am fortunate that people in the bank live up to the principles that the Bible teaches us," Simpao says.

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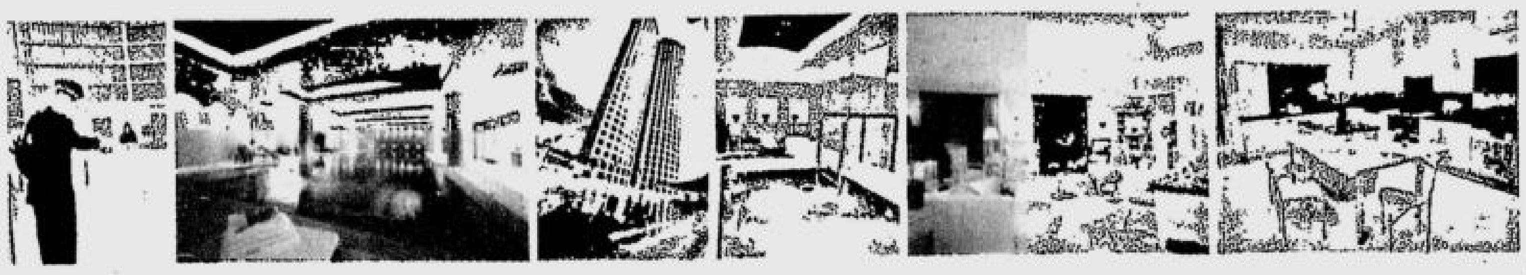

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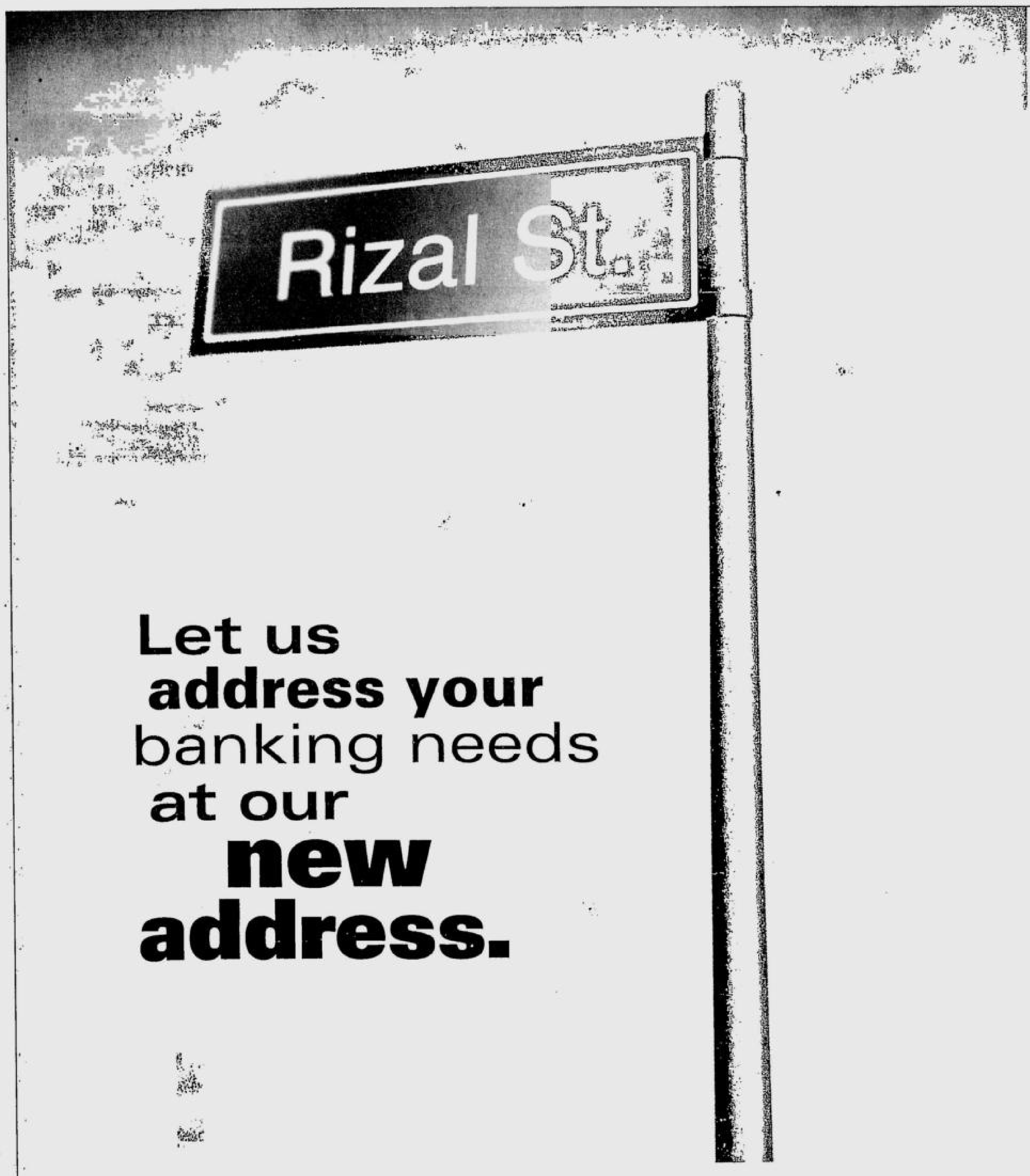
Maybank inaugurates relocated Baliuag branch

IN FITTING ceremonies, Maybank Philippines recently inaugurated its renovated branch in Baliuag, Bulacan. The inauguration attended by key officers of Maybank as well as civic officials and branch customers capped Maybank's bid to strengthen its presence and visibility in this premier area in Bulacan. The relocated branch is part of the bank's thrust to relocate its branches in more convenient areas closer to and more accessible to its clients. The Baliuag branch now has a more modern look and feel, providing a more conducive environment for banking – comparable to the other modernized and renovated Maybank branches and business centers. The branch located in Rizal street is foreseen to be one of the busiest branches of Maybank in Bulacan as some of its other key provincial branches in the Central Luzon area. Branch manager Geminiano Cruz views the inauguration as "a milestone for the branch that affirms once more – our belief in attaining the highest standards of service delivery to our customers. For Maybank as a whole, it shows our commitment to be a significant partner and key player in the development of the local community.

The Baliuag branch is just one of Maybank's 35 provincial branches. With more than 50 branches nationwide, Maybank is the first 100 percent-owned foreign commercial bank to have the most extensive reach. Among the other countries where it is present, Maybank has the most extensive branch network in the Philippines – next only to the branch network in Malaysia, where the parent bank is based and actively engaged in banking operations for more than 30 years.

Maybank Philippines is a member of the Maybank Group, Malaysia's largest banking group, ranked among the top 20 banks in Asia and among the top 150 in the world. It has more than 300 branches in Malaysia as well as operations in 13 countries. Maybank's host of financial services include commercial and merchant banking, investment banking, corporate finance, leasing and insurance. It also offers Internet banking and brokerage. The Maybank Group is poised to offer new and innovative products and financial services as it is backed by over US434 billion in assets and a network among the major financial centers worldwide.



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33rd PHIL. JAYCEE SENATE INDUCTION

THE PHILIPPINE Jaycee Senate held its 33rd national induction on Jan. 29 at New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City. Gen. Angelo T. Reyes, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, swore in the new set of officers. (From left) John A. Bautista, president; Manuel C. Arceño Jr., executive vice president; Ramon V. Villarama, VP-Luzon; Raul V. del Mar, VP-Visayas; Severo P. dela Cruz, VP-Mindanao; Felipe V. Briones, secretary general; Jose M. Justo, treasurer; Tirsendo Poloyapoy, director (Pagadian); Harish N. Nandwani, director (Bacolod); Lino P. Sarmiento, director (Bohol); Melanio D. Siao, director (Iligan) and Jerry S. Isla, auditor.

How to protect the poor . . .

(From page C12)

pan was exporting those tiny umbrellas found in the drink called Singapore Sling.

One can find the greatest export potential in the following fields: Information technology (IT) services, electronic components and products, garments and textiles, furniture, processed foods, metal components, shrimps and fish products, gifts and houseware, carrageenan and seaweed, jewelry, ceramics, marble, professional services and construction services.

Link the poor with exporters

Some object that the export industry is only open to firms with high levels of capital and technology. This path hence excludes the poor from export booms. Not so. Linking farm communities with export markets feeds the rural areas with dollar-fueled income. Agricultural exports have a major role to play in sharing the fruits of trade.

China, with a market of more than a billion people, has agreed to accord favorable tariffs to Philippine products. Agricultural exports to China, led by fruits, are projected to rise tenfold by 2004. Mangoes are seen to top these exports—the Philippines is the second largest mango exporter in the world. Philippine mangoes are also considered the best in the world.

We can follow the example of Sri Lanka's export villages. The government brought together export companies and selected poor communities. The village folk were trained in manufacturing the products sold by the said companies.

The government also helped the companies in marketing their exports. That way, these simple workers of Sri Lanka got to benefit from global trade.

Price is a great edge when nations compete in the export market, but this tack creates new problems. If we will compete via low prices, the Philippines will have to keep wages low. That doesn't help worker welfare and will mean keeping a lid on labor.

It is better to compete by excelling in the chosen field.

Carve a niche

We can carve out a niche in the hi-tech industries. The Philippines must prioritize technical training for the poor.

Electronics exports account for some 60 percent of our total exports. This sector grew by 25.3 percent last June to $2.23 billion. Global demand for electronics is swelling, as humanity makes the transition to the Internet economy. As such, the Philippines should sharpen her edge of having a large pool of techie labor.

An article by Wayne Arnold in the New York Times praises the tech scene in the Philippines. The article says that hi-tech talent here is "attractive to employers in Europe and the United States and is increasingly drawing multinationals like Trend Micro, America Online and Motorola."

There are about 200,000 students enrolled in computer-related courses. The Philippines has a larger pool of trained and trainable manpower than does Malaysia, Singapore and New Zealand.

Filipino tech workers are now in demand because there is an acute shortage of programmers in the United States.

"The shortage in the US of programmers—350,000 jobs are unfulfilled—and a growing preference for cheap labor are prompting US companies to turn to offshore hubs such as India, the Philippines and South Africa," says another article in USA Today.

The Philippines is the second largest exporter of software in Asia, after India. Our software exports total some $300 million. This barely scratches the surface of the global software market worth about $700 billion. *(Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com)*

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1	AXA	FRANCE	87,646	2,156	2	2	8	0	
2	ING GROUP	NETHERLANDS	62,492	5,250	1	8	3	1	
3	ASSICURAZIONI GENERALI	ITALY	53,723	872	8	2	13	0	
4	PRUDENTIAL	BRITAIN	42,220	877	7	2	11	0	
5	CNP ASSURANCES	FRANCE	26,803	464	11	2	12	0	

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RANK 1999	1998			REVENUES $ mil.	REVENUES % change from 1998	PROFITS $ mil.	PROFITS Rank	PROFITS % change from 1998	ASSETS $ mil
	13	SUMITOMO	JAPAN	95,701.6	7.5	314.8	433	—	47,819.8
	18	NIPPON TELEGRAPH & TELEPHONE	JAPAN	93,591.7	23.0	(609.0)	483	(112.9)	170,512.2
	[illegible]	MARUBENI	JAPAN	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
15		AXA	FRANCE	87,645.7	11.3	2,155.8	86	26.6	508,647.3
	[illegible]	BP AMOCO	BRITAIN	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	16	CITIGROUP	U.S.	82,005.0	7.3	9,867.0	2	69.9	716,900.0
	17	VOLKSWAGEN	GERMANY	80,072.7	4.9	474.7	192	(30.6)	67,275.9

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Who . . .

(From page C1)

Tan, CFBI president Dante Y. Go said: "We are proud to say we have no cronies in our group." Go is head of Sugarland, maker of the Eight O'clock powdered orange drink which was acquired by La Tondeña Distillers Inc. of the San Miguel group.

To emphasize the contrast in direction of the two Filipino-Chinese business groups, CFBI has chose to ally itself with the activist Makati Business Club rather than the stodgy Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry where FFCCI belongs.

A CFBI official said the group's founding members, which includes old rich Filipino-Chinese families, bolted FFCCI because they were disappointed over its lackadaisical leadership over the years. The final straw came during one of FFCCI's annual elections which was marred by controversy.

In its first three years, the CFBI pushed for more trade liberalization (it actively supported the opening of the retail trade sector), backed a tax consciousness campaign, endorsed the social accord for labor and management for industrial peace, and carried out several trade missions to establish more closer links with Chinese businessmen in other Asian countries.

Go said CFBI was instrumental in assuaging fears of Taiwanese investors who were about to abandon Subic during the height of the political crisis last year. Go said his group was able to obtain a $5-million soft loan from mainland China which would be used to fund research for hybrid rice in the country.

Go said CFBI would continue to shy away from engaging in partisan politics to ensure the integrity of their organization. Go said it was important for an organization to be independent in order to fulfill its advocacy role.

CFBI's immediate goal is to determine why the Philippines was getting only a fraction of the billions of dollars in investments that Taiwanese businessmen are pumping into Asia.

Go said that based on a previous trade mission to Taiwan, CFBI learned that the Taiwanese were turned off by the country's inimical tax policies, restrictions on foreign ownership of real estate, and restive labor sector.

CFBI will go to Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia from Feb. 26 to March 5 this year to get insights from their peers on why Taiwanese investors pour between $3 billion and $4 billion into these countries and only $800 million to the Philippines.

Go said CFBI's trade mission would also help in drumbeating the renewed business confidence in the country to help the Macapagal administration attract more investments here.

Fallacies . . .

(From page C2)

those from civil society, that there is a lot of a difference between advocating policy/program changes and doing the work themselves. Talking is certainly much easier than doing, especially when the "doing" involves working with the bureaucracy and under government rules and regulations. The "process" type of working, getting consensus, and need for frequent consultations, are not the cure for ensuring responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency. In fact, the "process type" of management could be debilitatingly perceived by the public as "indecisiveness," lack of competence and vision, with the public official being labeled as a " wimp."

Through the years, the advantages of being in politics have been lost on the general public through the activity of unscrupulous politicians who have taken advantage of their positions for their personal gain and power.

It is also unfortunate that the politician label has been loosely used to lump most everyone who is or has been in government, whether in an elective or appointive position. This explains why the majority of those so far appointed have been identified as politicians—former or incumbent government officials, senators, congressmen, etc., former officials of previous administrations too, etc.

These are people who merit their positions because of their own individual qualifications, plus the critical factor of experience in the art of public governance. If all of them were to be excluded, perhaps many of us would also be criticizing the government for appointing unknowns and inexperienced people to such key government positions. Let us also remember that successful businessmen or well-known advocates do not necessarily become model government servants.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author who is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines, president and CEO of Planning and Research Institute for Strategic Management and former secretary of the Interior and Local Government and president/general manager of the Government Service and Insurance System. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com.ph)

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For years Far East Printing (FEP) has been responsible for printing hundreds of thousands copies of the Inquirer everyday

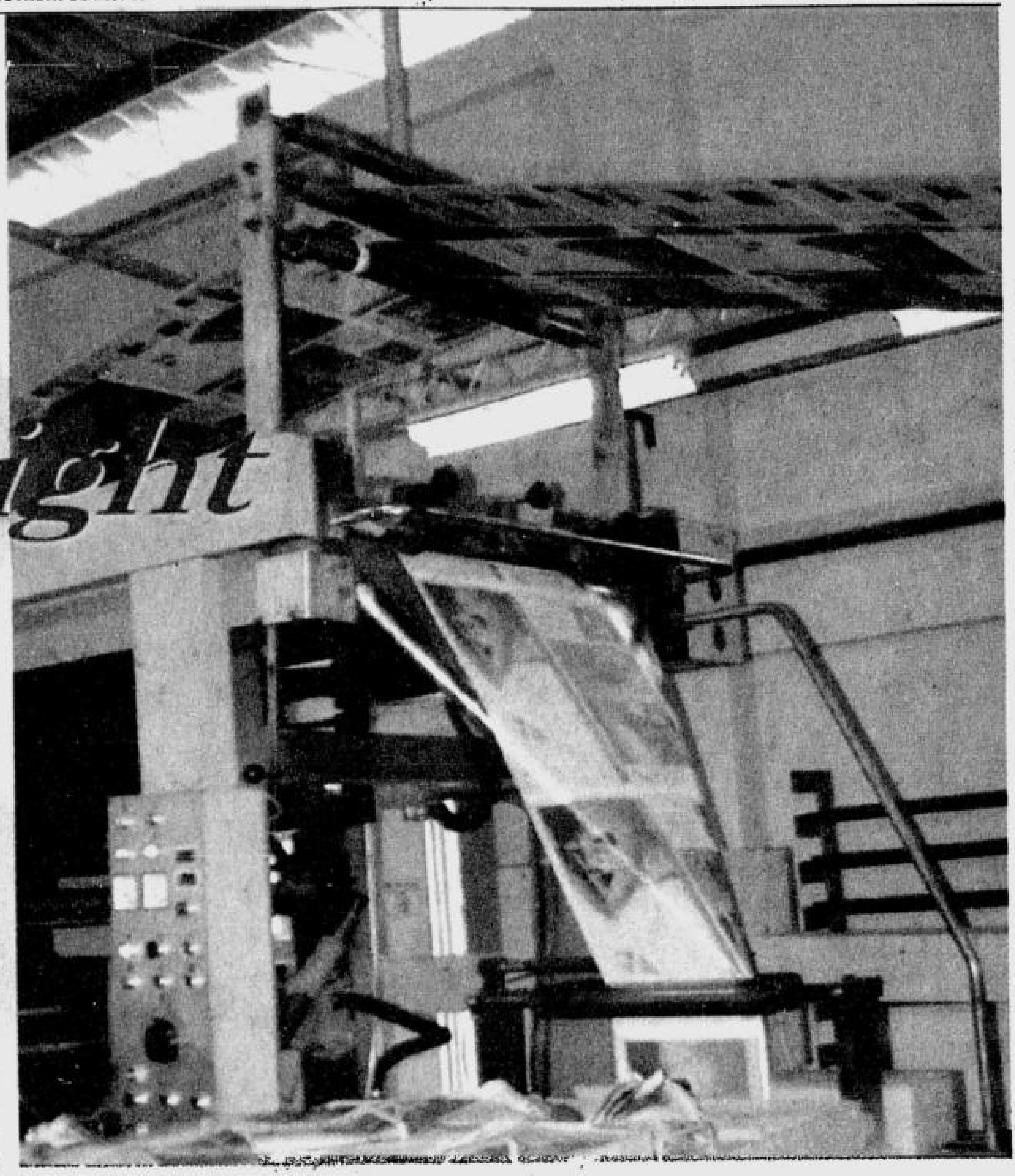
BY ARIES B. ESPINOSA

IT'S not enough that the dedicated men and women of the Inquirer get to put together—everyday without fail for nearly 16 years—the kind of newspaper that has held captive the attention and affections of the Filipino reader. An equally important aspect of publishing the Inquirer, or in any print media company for that matter, is printing enough copies for all its readers. Yet, looking more closely, it's not even enough to print just enough. Equally important is the quality of the paper and the time it gets in your hands.

For years Far East Printing (FEP) has been responsible for printing hundreds of thousands of copies of the Inquirer everyday. These copies are then eventually read by more than 1 million Filipinos nationwide. It used to be that FEP had a centralized printing press in Makati City—just beside the Inquirer Main offices—where all the copies were made. These copies would then be bundled according to its destination. From here, the newspaper would either be delivered via land and air to the different provinces throughout the country.

The advent of digital pre-press technology, coupled with the inherent problems of long-haul deliveries created the opportunity and the need to shift to a swifter, more efficient, and more reliable way to produce and deliver the newspaper. In February 2000, FEP opened its first satellite print-

THE NEWSPAPER/ C7



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The newspaper delivered . . .

(From page C6)

ing press in Metro Cebu. With digital prepress capability, the FEP main office in Makati was able to transmit digital files to the Cebu printers and, in effect, enabled the two plants to print copies simultaneously. The establishment of the FEP Cebu printers proved advantageous for the Inquirer's sister publication Cebu Daily News and financial paper Asian Wall Street Journal, as well. The FEP presses produced clearer copies at much faster printing speeds.

Mindanao was next on the line. This February, almost exactly a year after FEP Cebu was born, the FEP Davao plant is inaugurated. It would now be the largest newspaper printing press in Mindanao, and its machines boast of the speed and flexibility needed to address the demands of the second largest island of the country. Just like FEP Cebu, the Davao plant is electronically linked with FEP Makati.

"The Inquirer operation is fully digital, which enables the finished full page to be electronically sent to any of FEP's printing plants, whether in Makati, Cebu or Davao," reveals Dennis O. Valdes, FEP President.

The same Inquirer in Manila, he says, can now come out in the Visayas and Mindanao areas

> *Aside from the all-weather reliability of the linked FEP presses, another more tangible benefit would be the resulting growth in circulation for FEP's main client Inquirer*

He also discloses that none of the Inquirer's competing nationally circulated broadsheets have local printing presses in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. "These dailies will continue to be air-shipped from their Manila printing locations, on a weather-permitting basis, of course."

Aside from the all-weather reliability of the linked FEP presses, another more tangible benefit would be the resulting growth in circulation for FEP's main client Inquirer. "Circulation growth will initially be around 10-20 percent, just from the earlier arrival time," Valdes estimates. "In time, this may be as much as 50-60 percent, depending on the market's ability to absorb Inquirer sales."

FEP now prints as much as 260,000 copies of the Inquirer nationwide.

PDI Mindanao relocates

The Inquirer Mindanao Bureau is also

NEWSPAPER/ C10

SIDE view of FEP Davao

Greetings to

FEP PRINTING CORPORATION

on its 1st Anniversary
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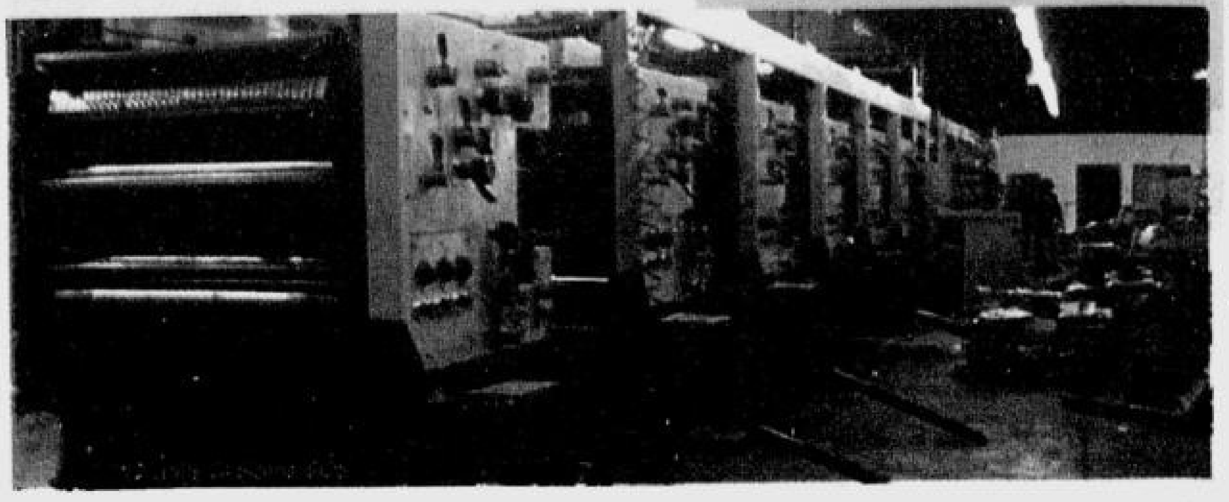
FEP brings the Inquirer closer to readers in the South



IT'S no fairy tale: The Inquirer will hit the newsstands in Mindanao on the same day and at the same hour as the paper comes out in Metro Manila. Just yesterday, that idea would sound improbable as readers in the South are getting used to having their favorite paper late in the day or worse, a day late.

Thanks to FEP Corp., which prints the Inquirer, readers in the Visayas and Mindanao will finally get their paper at the right time—early morning. With the opening of FEP's two new printing plants in Cebu City and Davao City, Inquirer's circulation in these areas is expected to boost by 10 to 20 percent.

Credit also goes to digital technology that enables FEP to be electronically linked to the Inquirer and at the same time to its two printing presses in the South. With the Inquirer's operation fully digital, the finished pages will be transmitted electronically to any of FEP's printing plants, whether in Makati, Cebu or Davao.

"This efficient system improves distribution since circulation will no longer be dependent on planes and ships and would not be delayed due to flight cancellations on account of bad weather and other fortuitous events. Depending on the old system (centralized prepress based in Makati) makes it impossible for us to print the newspaper in Cebu and Davao in time, and we solved that with these two printing presses," explains FEP president Dennis Valdes.

Located in a 4,000 sq.m. area lot, the 2,000 sq.m. building of the Davao City plant houses 12 SOLNA D25 2:1 printing units, making it the largest newspaper printing press in Mindanao. FEP Davao has a lot of potential, according to Valdes, who revealed that Inquirer's circulation of 220,000 to 230,000 copies Monday through Saturday and 250 to 260,000 on Sunday could further increase with the opening of the two new presses. "There's so much room for expansion since in the Davao building alone, we can fit in 12 more SOLNA units."

The SOLNA D25 2:1, also called the Y-unit (because of the "Y" letter the machine resembles), has a more efficient design—much better than the traditional printing units called 1:1 that print one color on top of a page and another color on the bottom simultaneously. Purchased from Denmark, the Y-unit prints two colors on the top of a page and one on the bottom, resulting in a more efficient color printing. This enables FEP Davao to print color more quickly--up to 25,000 copies per hour.

"These units are very flexible: They can print a 24-page front section with 4 pages in color and 20 pages in black and white or two Lifestyle sections of 8 pages each in full color at the same time. And since they are so efficient, they can be run with four to five pressmen per shift," explains Valdes.

In Cebu, FEP increased its printing capacity with the addition of three Y-units and installed new printing lines called C-1 and C-2 (Cebu Line 1 and 2). The projected 25-percent increase in capacity makes FEP's nationwide printing facilities compatible with each other, allowing the company to print the same Inquirer in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao

With the new presses near urban centers in the South, Inquirer would also be immediately available to cities such as Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga. Indeed, the most widely circulated newspaper will also become the most far-reaching newspaper in the country today. *(Charles E. Buban)*

Expansion summary of FEP Printing Corporation

(Reprinted from 2000 FEP Supplement)

March 1993 - FEP Printing Corporation was founded.

May 1994 - Mascardo Street Printing Plant inaugurated. Printing lines were transferred from Port Area.

October 1994 - Three lines of Harris Cottrell 845 became operational. The lines are called F1, F2 and F3.

Early 1995 - A fourth line of Harris 845s, F4, was added to the plant.

Late 1995 - Alliance Media Printing Inc. was formed as a sister company of FEP. Alliance houses the Uniman presses that have been purchased to expand capacity.

July 1996 - The installation of the first Uniman 4:2 press was started. The 5-unit press, with three Y-units and two mono units, was purchased from the Daily Record in New Jersey.

October 1996 - A second Uniman 4:2 press, with four Y-units, was purchased from Svedborg, Denmark. A brand-new mono unit was purchased from MAN Roland, Germany to complete the line.

Early 1997 - The first Uniman press, A1, became operational.

Mid 1997 - To further increase capacity, Harris lines F3 and F4 were "duplexed" or redesigned to run in tandem, effectively becoming a single line of 14 printing units called T4.

Late 1997 - The second Uniman press, A2, became operational

December 1997 - A small capacity press, a Solna D25, was purchased from Denmark. FEP rents a warehouse from Menzi Foundation in Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu. The press, named C1, was installed in Cebu to become the first regional print site of the Inquirer.

Early 1998 - Work was started to make lines F1 and F2 run in tandem also. The new line, with 14 printing units, was called T1.

February 1998 - The Cebu Daily News was launched; printed by FEP Printing Corporation. While C1 was being installed, copies were printed in FEP Manila and flown to Cebu daily. In effect, CDN became the first Philippine newspaper to be completely CTF or "Computer-to-Film."

April 1998 - The Asian Wall Street Journal began printing on T4 and T1. FEP is AWSJ's ninth print site in Asia, while the AWSJ is FEP's third customer. The paper is electronically transmitted from Hong Kong each morning.

September 1998 - Inquirer's front page went color. Gradually, the entire paper began to move to full CTF.

October 1998 - C1 became operational. With nine Y-units, it has virtually the same capacity as T1, T4, A1 and A2. CDN started printing in Cebu.

Late 1998 - Two Eskofot Mercure Image Setters were installed in FEP Cebu. PDI and CDN can now electronically transmit their newspapers to FEP Cebu.

January 1999 - A third Uniman line was purchased, once again from Denmark. The Uniman 4:2 S has two satellite units, two mono units and two Y-units. Its folder is rated at over 60,000 copies per hour, which will make "A3" our fastest press.

February 1999 - Two Eskofot Mercure Image Setters were installed in FEP Manila, connected to the PDI Building by a fiber optic cable. The Vis/Min circulation of Inquirer's Business Section started printing in Cebu.

July 1999 - Inquirer's Lifestyle started printing in Cebu.

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PRE-PRESS room

When old news are as good as new

IT would be a no-no for any news outfit to get old news and pass them off as new. But in the FEP presses, that may actually be a virtue. When you think of recycling newspapers, that is.

Far East Printing has taken concrete steps to minimize the environmental impact of newspaper printing. "In 1997, we shifted our petroleum-based inks to soy-based inks," Dennis O. Valdes, FEP President says. "The new inks enabled us to deliver a better-printed newspaper that was 100-percent recyclable." Valdes also points out that FEP also uses 100-percent recycled newsprint, produced from local newsprint-making companies.

Just recently, FEP has embarked on an industry-wide recycling campaign—something which Valdes opines is "long overdue." The goal of the recycling campaign seems modest at first look. "If we can only increase the total recycling volume of local newspapers to 10 percent, we will have made an enormous impact on our environment," Valdes stresses.

He reveals that at present, only 1-2 percent of newspapers get back to the local newsprint mills. Aside from that, he adds that not more than 1 percent of the total newsprint output of newspapers and directories are being re-used either by fruit growers who use old newspaper to protect produce from pests or by market vendors who wrap fish and produce in old paper.

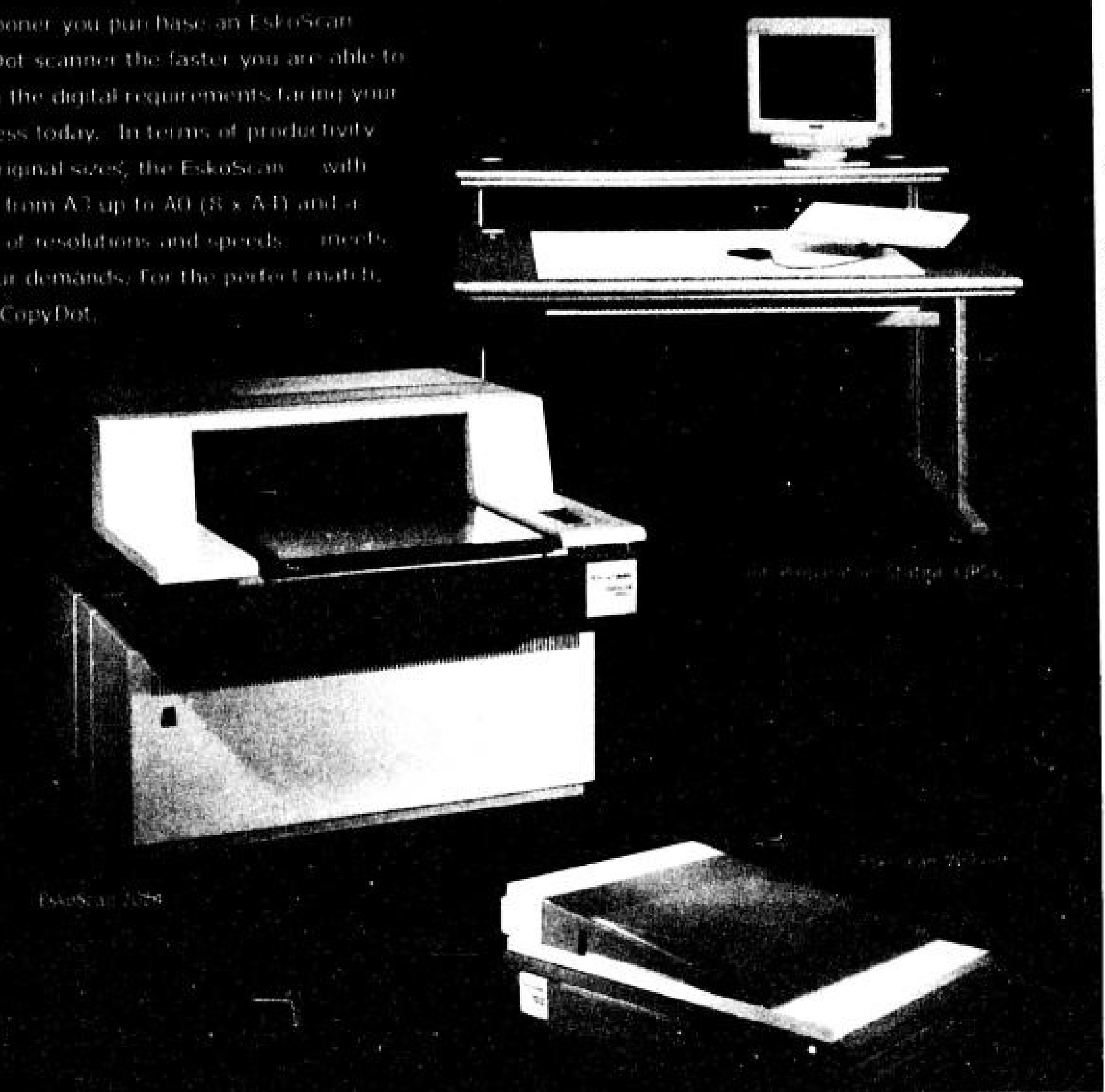
"So, with re-use and recycling, the total is a maximum 3 percent. The other 97 percent goes to the dumpsites," Valdes observes.

The Inquirer alone uses approximately 25,000 metric tons of newsprint annually. "Bulletin is probably just a bit more than half of that, and then a bit less for the Star. Other newspapers generate only around 1,000 MT annually. It all adds up to quite a lot of paper."

Add to that the old school books, pad papers, and telephone directories, and a 10-percent return would now be enormous.

"We believe that all newspaper companies should be involved. FEP will be happy to take any newspaper, whether Inquirer or not," Valdes avers. The FEP campaign calls for the participation of the community, as well.

"We will allow consumers to deliver their old newspapers to central collection points. These can be their barangay halls. If the barangay captains then deliver the newspapers to FEP Printing, we will pay them in cash. This is an excellent way for barangays to earn extra money as well as improve their garbage segregation."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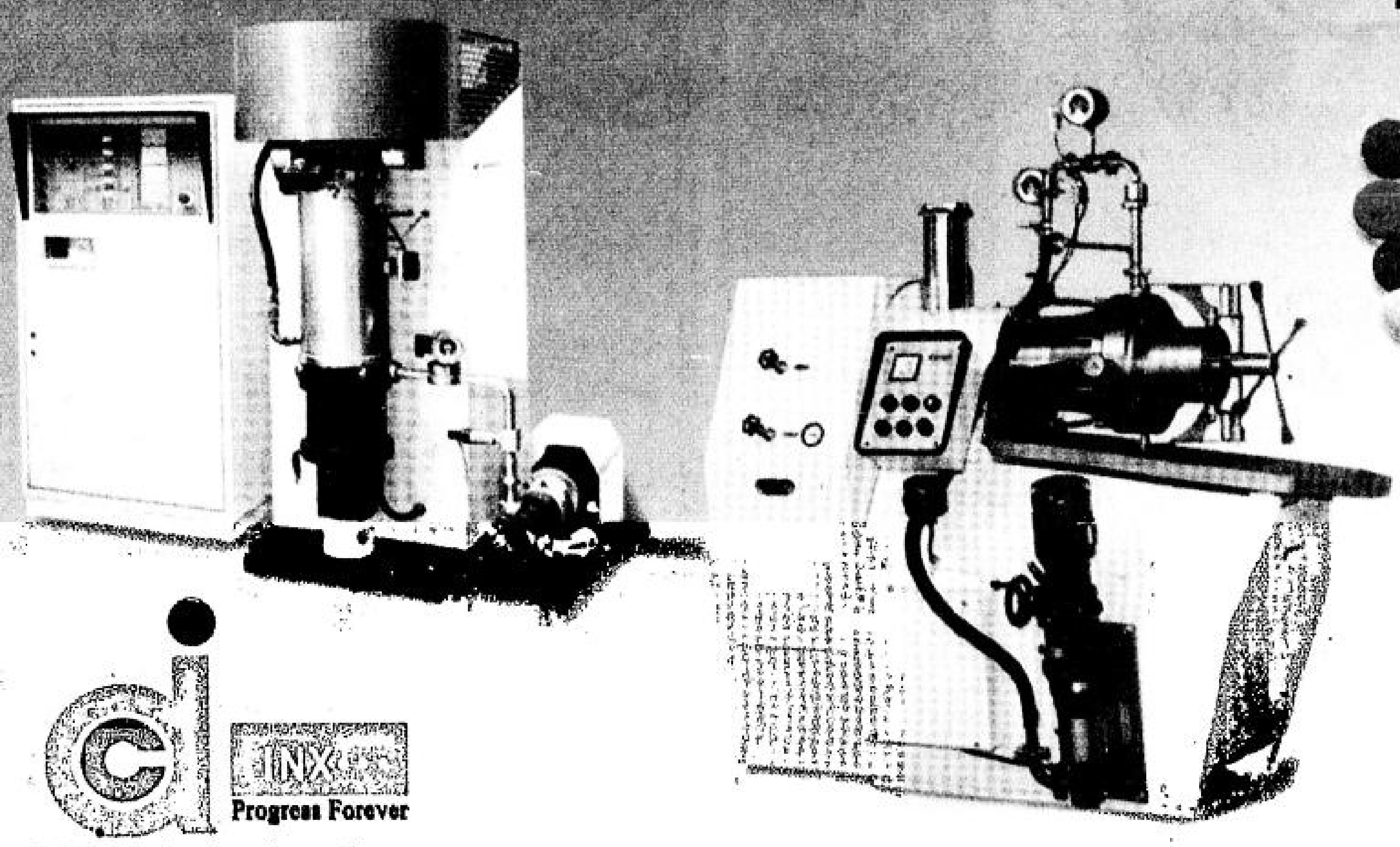
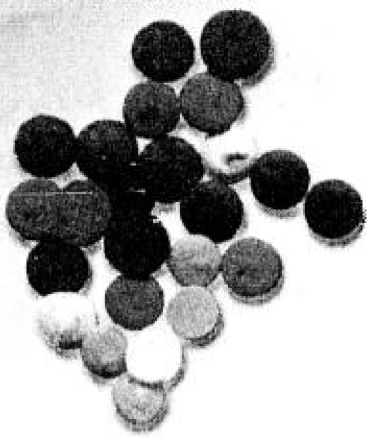
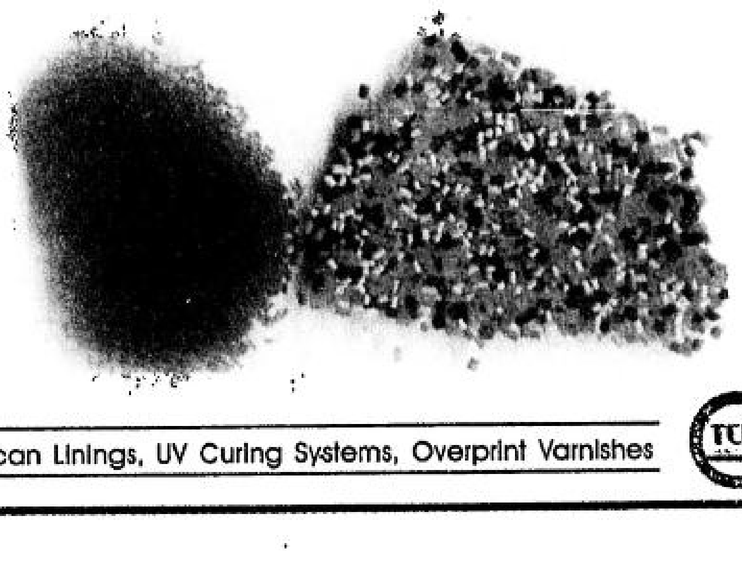
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The newspaper delivered . . .

(From page C7)

PRE-PRESS room

scheduled to relocate its offices to the FEP Davao plant. "The PDI Mindanao Bureau will be able to use FEP's leased lines to avoid long-distance call charges to Manila and Cebu. This should result in substantial savings," Valdes explains.

He also adds that the Ma-a section of Metro Davao, where FEP is located, is due for expansion once the Davao airport is relocated to the Diversion Road in 2002. "This will make the Bureau more centrally located over the long run."

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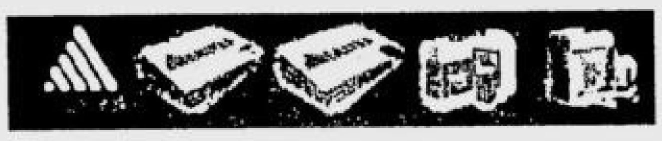

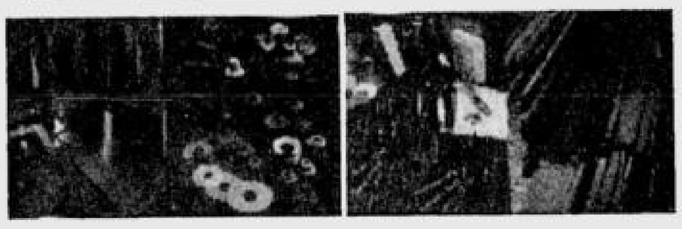

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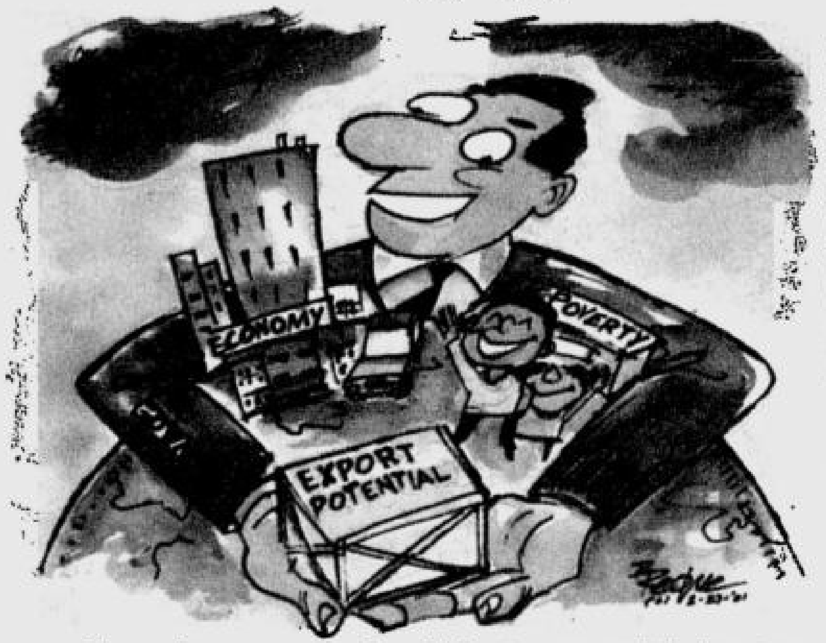
By Dennis M. Arroyo

ONE DANGER of globalization is that portfolio funds can easily rush out at lightning speed. In 1997, South Korea lost $1 billion a day even it had $4 billion in reserves. One way to prepare for the adverse effects of globalization then is to prepare before it hits full force.

This economic vulnerability will hit the poor hard, given the strong link between the downturn in the economic and mass poverty. According to one study, a one-percent drop in per capita income in Latin America resulted in a 3.7-percent fall in per capita income among the urban poor and a 2-percent slide among the rural poor.

During the Asian crisis, the dropout rates for Indonesia's poorest children aged seven to 12 shot up from 1.3 percent in 1997 to 7.5 percent in 1998.

There should be a change in policy outlook, shift from fire fighting to preparation. Don't scramble to make safety nets for the poor only when the fire breaks out. Have them prepare before it hits. Mobilize resources and measures before the disaster hits—safety nets must not be an afterthought. Such safety nets include wider social security coverage, child feeding programs, training and credit for self-employment and food-for-work projects.



Avoid macro overkill

When the peso falls or when inflation surges, the standard cure is to raise interest rates. However, high rates can result in long-term damage. When rates are too steep, businesses become reluctant to borrow money. They postpone investments, and some new enterprises may be aborted. Some firms may even shut down. This results in lost jobs. So beware of raising interest rates through the roof.

The government may have to trim the budget when the fiscal deficit is just too wide. Even such a step must be pro-poor. Don't cut down on the programs that matter most to poverty reduction. Spare basic public school education, rural infrastructure, slum upgrading, preventive health care, water and sanitation. Take a hint from Peru's Fiscal Prudence and Transparency Law, one section says that poverty alleviation programs should be treated as top priority in times of austerity.

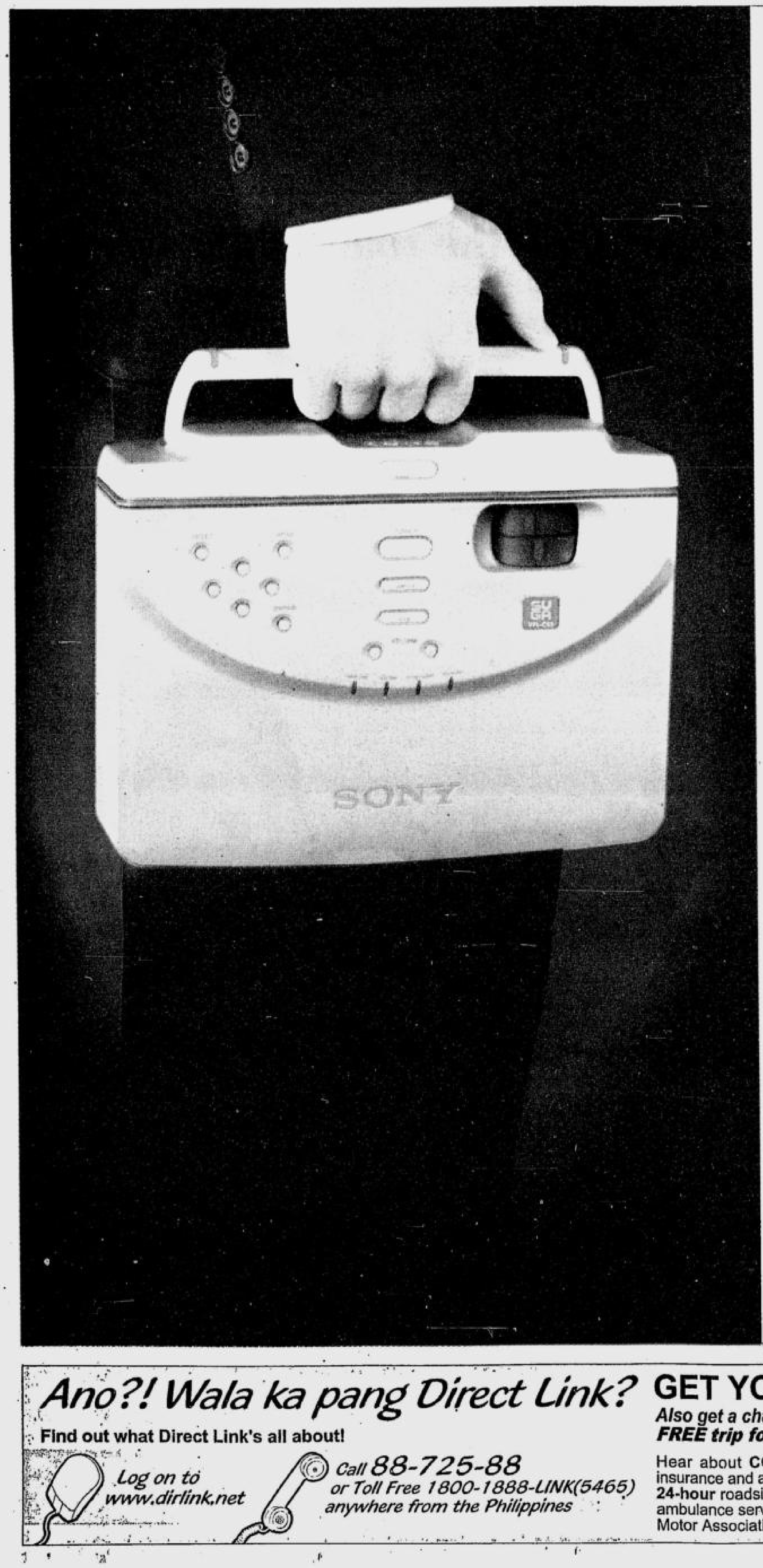
Get into exports

Amid all the gloomy data last year there was one bright report on the economy. It was the fact that exports in August 2000 surged to an 11-month peak. The level of $3.529 billion was the highest since September 1999.

This was to be expected, even from textbook theory. A falling peso means that the dollar is worth more. It makes sense then to earn in dollars. That's why more and more companies are into exports.

Industrial powers of today started by exporting humble products. Germany began by exporting harmonicas. South Korea debuted with wigs. After World War II, Ja-

HOW/ C4



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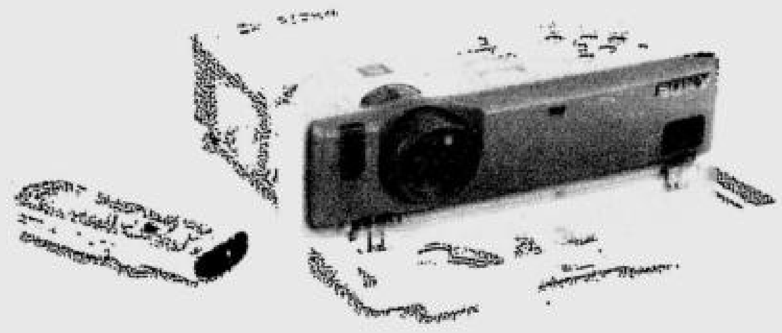

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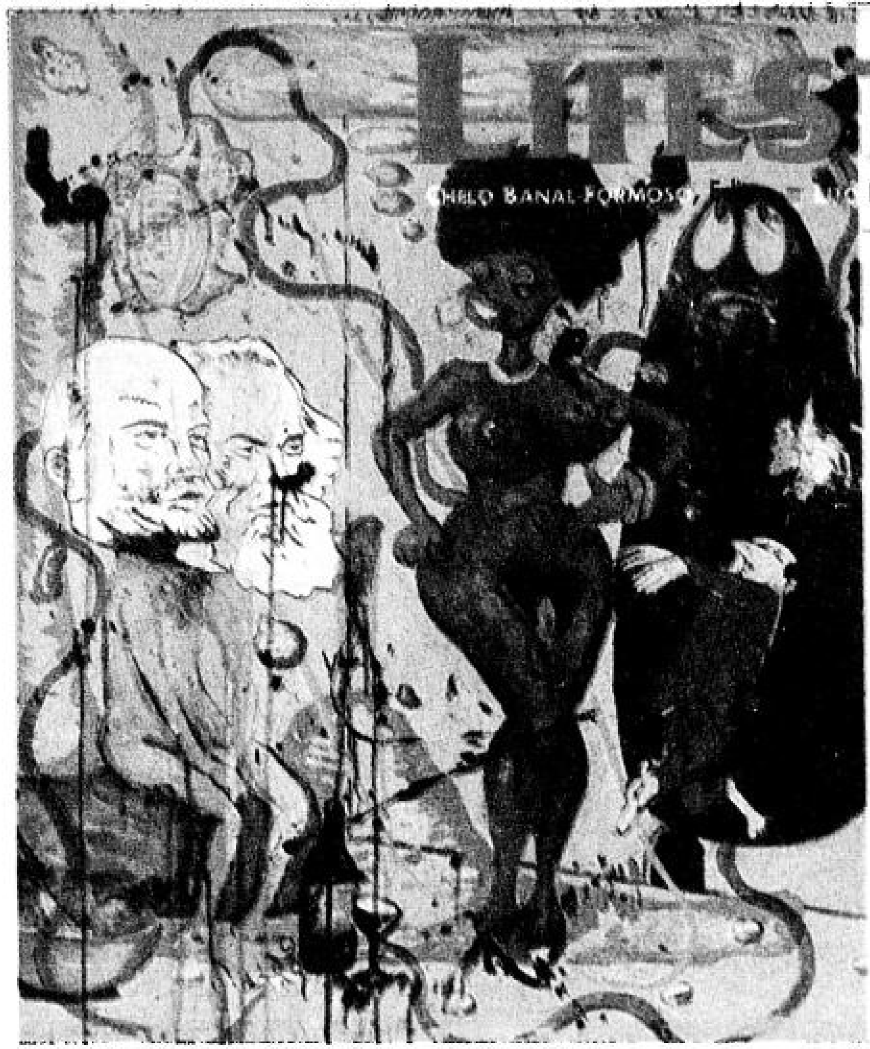
Manuel Ocampo at the Jack Shainman Gallery



"THE UNSEEN Power of the Monochrome," acrylic on canvas

By B. Carlo M. Tadiar
PHOTOS COURTESY OF JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY

NEW YORK—By far the most important Filipino artist in today's global art scene is Manuel Ocampo. His third New York solo was mounted at the Jack Shainman Gallery in Chelsea late last year. Obligatorily, both the New York Times and the Village Voice reviewed the show, the Voice shortlisting the exhibit in its weekly set of recommendations of New York cultural events, the Voice Choices.

Titled "Those Long Dormant Pimples of Inattention Meandering through the Cranium Arcade of Pitiless Logic Swastikating Between Love and Hate," the show features works which depart from the artist's previous works in their play on text derived from the idiom of art criticism.

Another new aspect is the diminution of a patently Catholic colonial ambience and thereby some manifest sense of a Filipino provenance. Ocampo gained renown for work that put a sometimes shocking and violative spin on colonial Catholic iconography.

At Shainman, the antiqued, twisted quotes from Catholic colonial art are mostly obscured, though there is a pair of takes on the Crucifixion and a saint's halo (on a puppy dog). Instead, the dominant resource has become a distinctly modern American children's iconography, images purloined from vintage grammar-school storybooks and bubble-gum cartoons.

The baroque length of the show's title seems to be the only thing faintly Filipino (one can just imagine a Tagalized version as the title of a Mel Chionglo production: "Ang mga Tulog na Tagyawat...").

But part of the charisma of Ocampo's work has always lain in its provocative counter-deployment of the artist's author-position as a postcolonial Catholic subject, a Filipino, signified by the bank of images that he raids. This paradoxically puts the work in a category of creativity which could not but have its roots in a place like the Philippines, but which, sadly, cannot find much understanding there, cannot find vindication in its nativity—except through its alienation, its foreignness.

Thirty-five-year-old Ocampo was born and raised in Quezon City and began his BFA at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts in Diliman. He moved to the United States in 1986, where the recognition for his art prospered to such a degree that, it could be argued, a survey of international contemporary art would be remiss if it failed to include him.

Influential Asian

The first time I saw an original work of his was in 1994 at a gallery in Santa Monica, California, in a group show which included all the most important names in the international art scene—everyone that was anyone, from all the pioneer European and American modernists who were still alive at the time to the super-starlets created by the '80s. It was an art-world Milky Way. Pinoy that I am, I was, of course, as star struck as a "That's Entertainment" acolyte at a Lea Salonga Broadway opening.

Described by Time magazine as one of the most influential Asians in America, Ocampo has appeared on every major forum for the discussion of art (including three articles in the New York Times' Arts section last year alone). For me (groupy that I am), one of his coolest credits is for cover art on the musician Beck's album "Odelay," the credit shared with Beck's grandfather Al Hansen, one of the founders of the FluXus art movement along with Yoko Ono and David Medalla.

Despite the acclaim, Ocampo remains little known in the country of his origin, a nation obsessed with Western validation, so evident in the fetishization of the ascription "world-class."

For Ocampo's "perversions" cannot really

MANUEL/ p.D6

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Filipinos must fight for their heritage

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

THE HERITAGE Conservation Society was invited to present a position paper at the recently completed Kompil Multisectoral Conference. The paper is reproduced in its entirety:

Culture and arts are issues often relegated to the back burner of state concerns. Their significance in the creation of national identity is often overlooked in favor of what are perceived to be more pressing problems of the country.

A close look at our problems, however, shows that most of them stem from the lack of a collective idea of nationhood. Many individuals are intent on seeing to their personal needs, overlooking the needs of the greater majority. Individual rights are often emphasized over collective rights. Preservation of heritage is a collective right.

The Heritage Conservation Society (HCS) sees itself as involved in collective rights, seeking that the people recapture their access to national culture and its common property such as heritage sites and open spaces.

The HCS believes that a comprehensive national culture and arts program, with emphasis on heritage conservation, ensures that a sense of Philippine-ness is instilled in the Filipinos. This is necessary because heritage conservation is about instilling pride in the accomplishments of generations long gone.

> Filipinos must also fight for public domain areas such as open parks and sidewalks. Too often, national and local governments give them away for private use

Renewed quality of life

It is important to address the need for every Filipino to know who he or she is through understanding his heritage and culture. Since the recent celebration of our Centennial, it has become even more urgent for both national and local governments to implement important policies to preserve for public use heritage sites, buildings, objects of national significance and cultural resources for the inspiration and benefit of every Filipino.

There are many significant architectural, historic and cultural resources being destroyed all over the country, that protective legislation is urgently required. The proposed legislation should:

- Define a national policy of preservation for public use historic sites, buildings, objects of national significance and cultural resources;
- Define the national agency with private sector trustees that will be responsible for implementing the policy;
- Define the relationship between the national agency and local government programs that will implement the policy at local levels;
- Create a National Trust as a nonprofit, charitable, educational corporation to receive donations for cities, buildings and objects significant for Filipino culture, and to preserve and administer them for public benefit. The trust will also receive money and donations to carry out preservation programs as well as educate local governments;
- Create a National Register of protected historic places, districts, sites, buildings and objects significant to Filipino history, architecture and culture.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The purpose of landmark designation, as will be set forth in the law, is to safeguard the cities' historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage as well as to stabilize and improve property values, foster and enhance pride and the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past. To ensure protection of the national landmarks, incentives will be created at national and municipal levels through taxation. There will also be special funding schemes from public institutions to finance conservation projects. There will be a need to work with local governments to provide incentives to restoring or investing in heritage sites.

Immediate efforts should also be made to pass municipal legislation and to implement programs in historic cities and towns throughout the Philippines. Examples are the old Manila districts (Quiapo, San Miguel, Santa Cruz, Binondo, Ermita-Malate), old Iloilo districts, the historic towns of Vigan, Taal (Batangas), Carcar (Cebu), Silay (Negros Occidental) and others. The protection and enhancement of a city's heritage does not only improve the quality of life for the community and increases its sense of cultural pride, but it also develops attractions for tourists and visitors. If managed properly, they can be sources of income for the community.

Four landmark types are suggested: (examples from the City of Manila)

1. Individual landmarks such as the Manila Hotel, the Luneta Hotel, Army-Navy Club, San Sebastian Church, the Metropolitan Theater, the Manila Post Office, Philippine Normal University campus, Malacañang Palace;
2. Interior landmarks such as the MacArthur Suite (Manila Hotel), Malacañang Museum and homes of national heroes;
3. Historic districts such as Intramuros, the District of Malacañang, Historic Quiapo, Ermita-Malate and Escolta;
4. Scenic landmarks such as Manila Bay, Rizal Park, the American Cemetery and the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Right to public areas

Our cities have grown with little regard for the right of every Filipino to have access to public areas for convenience and for recreation. It is vital to have a clear national policy that will ensure the implementation of heritage protection laws and codes for the benefit of every citizen. This national policy should ensure that allocation of resources for public use becomes an important parameter in the planning of cities and communities.

This national policy, most importantly implemented in municipal programs, should encompass the need for officials in every municipality to be trained in current standards of community management. This includes training in city planning for them to understand the need for public amenities such as bus terminals, markets, schools, etc, to enhance community life. It is also important they be shown standards from other countries on how to improve community amenities to ensure a better standard of living.

A policy that requires greening to be part of planning should be formulated. The "Green Plan" will ensure the planting and maintenance of trees and shrubs. It will require the construction and proper maintenance of sidewalks wide enough for people to walk on. Proper sidewalk management allows community members to walk to work, lessening the strain on public transport.

Parks must be protected. There are many instances in which significant areas within public parks have been given up for private use, as what have happened at Rizal Park and the Quezon Memorial Circle.

People's access to scenic landmarks must be respected. These include unimpeded physical or visual access to sites and views such as the Manila Bay, the Tagaytay Ridge and Laguna de Bay. It also includes the implementation of important laws to give access to public resources like the Pasig River. In other words, it has become vital for the nation to redefine the meaning of public domain to protect the interest of the people.

There must be a national policy on the allocation of public domain areas in land use.

The importance of heritage conservation in nation-building cannot be overemphasized. Fighting for heritage conservation means instilling a sense of pride in being Filipino. It also means advocating livelihood through increased employment opportunities in heritage conservation services (for planners, architects, craftsmen, construction workers), and in tourism and allied services as well. Heritage conservation is about improving the quality of life for every Filipino. It is about healthy, orderly cities with sufficient open spaces that counter the visual and environmental pollution that has become the normal situation in every Philippine city.

E-mail The Heritage Conservation Society at hcs@homeharbor.com or call 521-2239.

E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph

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Canadian cultural festival in Naga

NAGA City takes a glimpse of Canada as it celebrates a week-long festival of Canadian culture on March 6-14 at the University of Nueva Caceres.

Dubbed as Canadian Cultural Week, a joint project of the Canadian embassy and the University of Nueva Caceres, the festival will be highlighted by a political forum, film screenings and an exhibit on Canada.

The forum on Philippines-Canada bilateral relations will be held at the Instructional Media Center of the University of Nueva Caceres at 9 a.m. The forum will gather political science students and faculty, local government officials and members of the media to discuss the different dimensions of Philippines-Canada relations following a presentation by embassy political officer Robert Burley.

The forum will be followed by a screening of two award-winning Canadian films and a film forum at 1:30 p.m. "The Little Red Dot" by Mitra Sen is a thought-provoking film that empowers people to challenge racism. "Draw Me a Song" by Francine Desbiens is meant to help young people deal with short-term separation from their parents.

Other art films will also be screened during the festival. "Bethune: The Making of a Hero" by Philip Borsos narrates the story of a Canadian hero who had done great deeds in China and Spain. "Margaret's Museum" by Mort Ransen is a powerful movie that unveils the struggles of a woman who lives in a mining town. "Snow Cat" by Sheldon Cohen is a timeless tale of enduring love. "Charles and Francois" by Co Hoedeman tackles on euthanasia, although its focus is on the extraordinary relationship between a grandfather and his grandson.

Canada has been cooperating closely with the Philippines in the development of audiovisual media. They recently ratified the Audiovisual Co-production Agreement which will complement the growing cultural relations and foster greater cooperation between Filipino and Canadian producers.

Call Ric Perez, instructional media specialist of the University of Nueva Caceres, at (054) 811-5680.

UP awards 18 creative writing fellowships

LIKHAAN: The UP Creative Writing Center has awarded 18 fellowships for the 38th UP National Writers Workshop, to be held at the Hotel Paradiso in Baguio City on March 25 to April 7.

Chosen from among around 200 applicants, the 18 Writing Fellows are Katherine Rose A. Calingasan, Ma. Celeste D. Flores, Gerardo T. Los Baños and Socorro Mignon A. Villanueva (fiction in English); Mark Anthony R. Cayanan, Vicente Coscolluela, Patricia Ann V. Pangasinan and Yavanna S. Valdellon (poetry in English); José Ma. Bayani, Brian James Camaya, Cyril Maaño and Lorela Mae P. Montes (fiction in Filipino); Jayson P. Jacobo, Elizabeth V. Mapula, Jenny B. Orillos and Edgar C. Samar (poetry in Filipino); and Allan B. Lopez (one-act play in Filipino) and Gil A. Palma (screenplay in English).

Two slots are reserved for writers in Iluko, whose names will be announced later.

The theme of this year's workshop is "Ang Bayan at ang Manunulat." The workshop will be directed by CWC director Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo. She will be joined by a teaching panel of distinguished writers, all associates, advisers and resident fellows of the CWC: Gémino H. Abad, Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, José Y. Dalisay Jr., J. Neil C. Garcia, Anton M. Juan Jr., Domingo G. Landicho, Bienvenido L. Lumbera, Vim D. Nadera, Charlson L. Ong, Ma. Carla M. Pacis, Jun Cruz Reyes, Lilia Quindoza Santiago, Roland B. Tolentino, Ricardo M. de Ungria and René O. Villanueva.

This year's National Fellow for Fiction, Erwin Castillo, and National Fellow for Drama, Gina Marie Tagasa, have been invited to deliver their fellowship lectures during the Workshop.

This summer, National Writers' Workshop is sponsored by UP Diliman Chancellor Emerlinda R. Roman, and held with the UP College Baguio, whose Dean Priscilla Supnet Macansantos, is herself a former Writing Fellow. The welcome dinner for the Fellows, traditionally held at Mario's Restaurant, will be graced by Mayor Mauricio Domogan, who has been a strong supporter of the Workshop.

Another National Writers' Workshop is held every October in either UP Visayas or UP Mindanao. Since 2000, this second workshop is open only to writers based in either the Visayas or Mindanao. It includes works in Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Waray and other Visayan languages, as well as English and Filipino.

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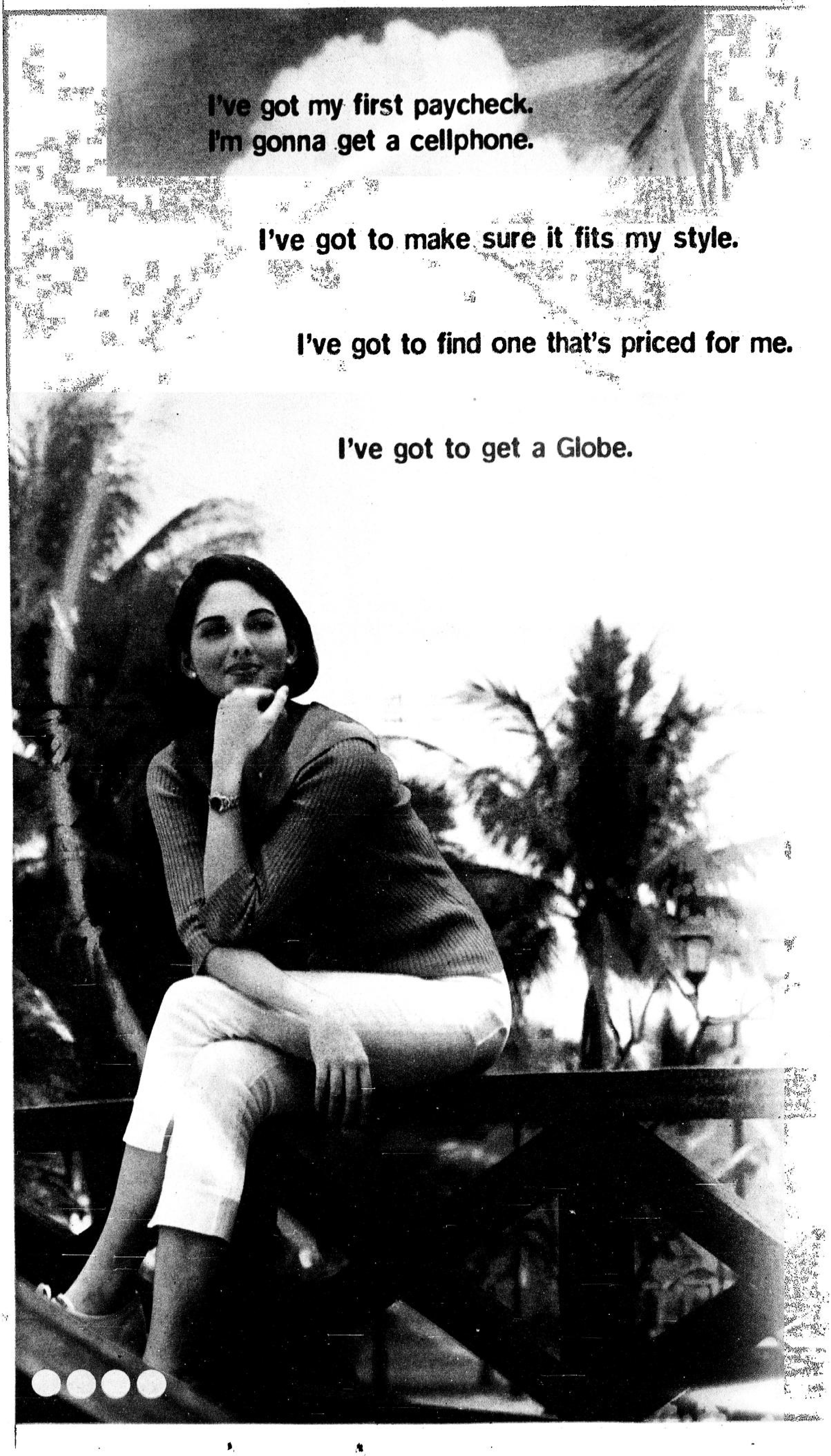
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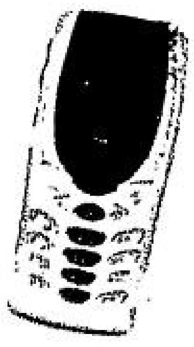

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Manuel Ocampo at the Jack Shainman Gallery

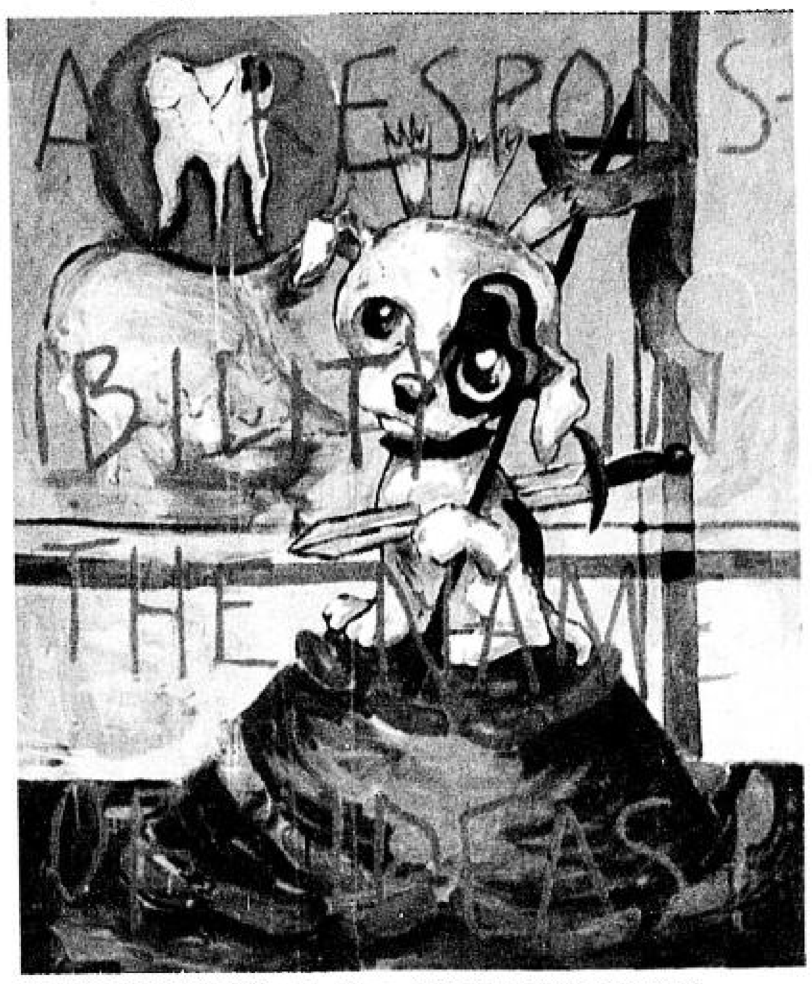
(From page D1)

be shown in the Philippines. Expectably, it has offended some Filipinos who have seen them abroad. He caused an uproar at a Los Angeles city government celebration of Philippine art and culture by unfurling a banner depicting a dog being roasted. His work was solicited for a major exhibit in the Philippines but withdrawn because, he was told, Filipinos are not yet ready for his work.

At Ocampo's Shainman opening there are almost no Filipinos. Two Filipinos leave out of disgust. (Filipino artists Emmanuel Garibay and Bert Antonio are among the few who stay.) There is more than enough here to repulse most Filipinos, the depictions of bowels and blood (including those of Snow White), an air of sordidness and the two crucifixes previously mentioned, one of which bears the text: "A Device Frequently Recognized as a Device."

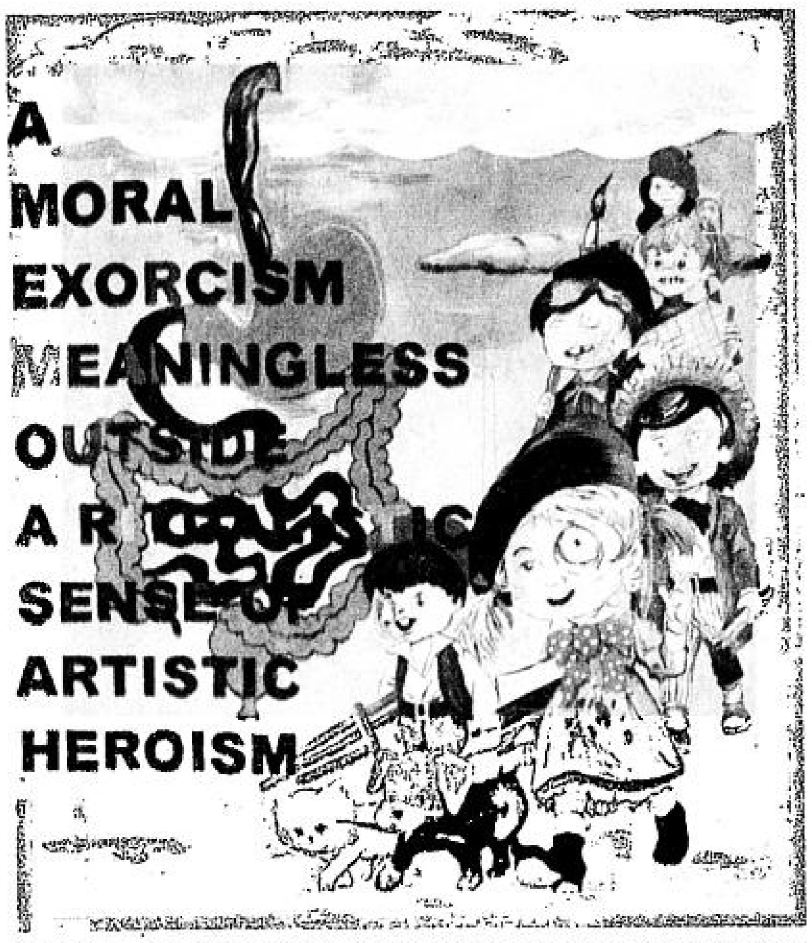
Fortunately for Ocampo, his art is not dependent on Catholic Filipino-ness in order to survive. One would be tempted say he has traveled out of that parochialism into a space where his art finds greater comprehension, were it not for Ocampo's own work plainly asserting that where it has succeeded in landing is only just another parochialism.

Ocampo's Chelsea opening is, in terms of prestige, nonetheless—indeed, all the more—for the Filipino walkouts. The audience is elevated in the cultural register of this global capital and, it follows, almost uniformly white. It ranges from youth who are presumably art students, the hyperfashionista-culturati in Jil Sander sneakers and Helmut Lang overcoats, to the earnest "culture" groupy in some versions of that quilted batik jacket purchased on an eco-trip to Bali circa 1984. Not that I'm really looking at the people; I am here, after all, for the art. Whoah! Who's the babecious Chelsea boy in the Allesandro dell'Acqua suit?



"A RESPONSIBILITY in the Name of Ideas," acrylic on canvas

He is perhaps the most important Filipino artist in today's global art scene, but the 'world-class' qualities of his art won't exactly endear him to Filipinos



"A MORAL Exorcism Meaningless Outside a Ritualistic Sense of Artistic Heroism," acrylic on cavas

Far cry

Shainman is in New York's currently most fashionable district, a SoHo before it became the Prada/Mercer Hotel SoHo, at the very western edge of lower Manhattan. Two blocks up is the new Comme des Garçons store, a spaceship environment injected into what was once an auto bodyworks shop. A couple of blocks further up, art superstar Damien Hirst has just opened another blockbuster at the Gasgosian gallery. The neighborhood is marked by its air of abandonment by outspent manufacturing factories fleeing the onslaught of greater capital. It still has that feeling of dereliction and waste that once made SoHo so cutting-edge.

It's a far cry from where Filipinos as a nation make their bid at the sociocultural capital in the modern Western world, the Philippine Center, almost midtown on Fifth Avenue.

The first time I attended an exhibit at the Philippine Center, I was dumbstruck. Of course, I was stunned by that Imeldific capiz-shell chandelier which dominates the space. The showstopper of the space, however, was that parade of texts proclaiming Philippine localities: Tagbilaran, the wall reads as if in exclamation points, Ormoc! Dagupan! Cebu!

The exhibit I attended was a group show of artists from a particular region of the Philippines. Their works seemed to have been plastered indiscriminately on the walls, occupying almost every inch of space in a dizzying array, a carabao here, an orchid there, a riverside here. The authors of the works were proudly in barong tagalog, surrounded by friends and relatives who comprised a throng. It looked like all of Elmhurst, Queens, was in attendance.

Along the curb in front pulled up a black stretch limousine out of which alighted—lo and behold—the daughter of a former president of the Philippines, immaculately turned out for cocktails in a sheer strapless dress and accessorized with the status symbol to beat—a white consort, a hefty, prosperous-looking man who seemed to have just stepped out of a tanning salon, and a white female friend.

A hush fell over the crowd as the group walked in. A pallor (or should I say, a negritude?) was cast over the other guests by the ebullience of the latest arrivals. The barongs looked even tackier; the complexions acquired an air of undernourishment in the face of the hyper-hydrated, the super-exfoliated look of the star guest. An almost racial difference arose between her and the rest of us.

After exchanging pleasantries with the organizers of the show, she scanned the works and picked out about five from the walls, pointing her choices one by one. Exeunt the former first daughter and her party. The limousine pulled away.

I wondered, where is she going to put her purchases? It's not like she can hang them next to that piece by one of the founders of modernism, which forms a focal point of her living room. They just wouldn't go, would they?

Unfashionable

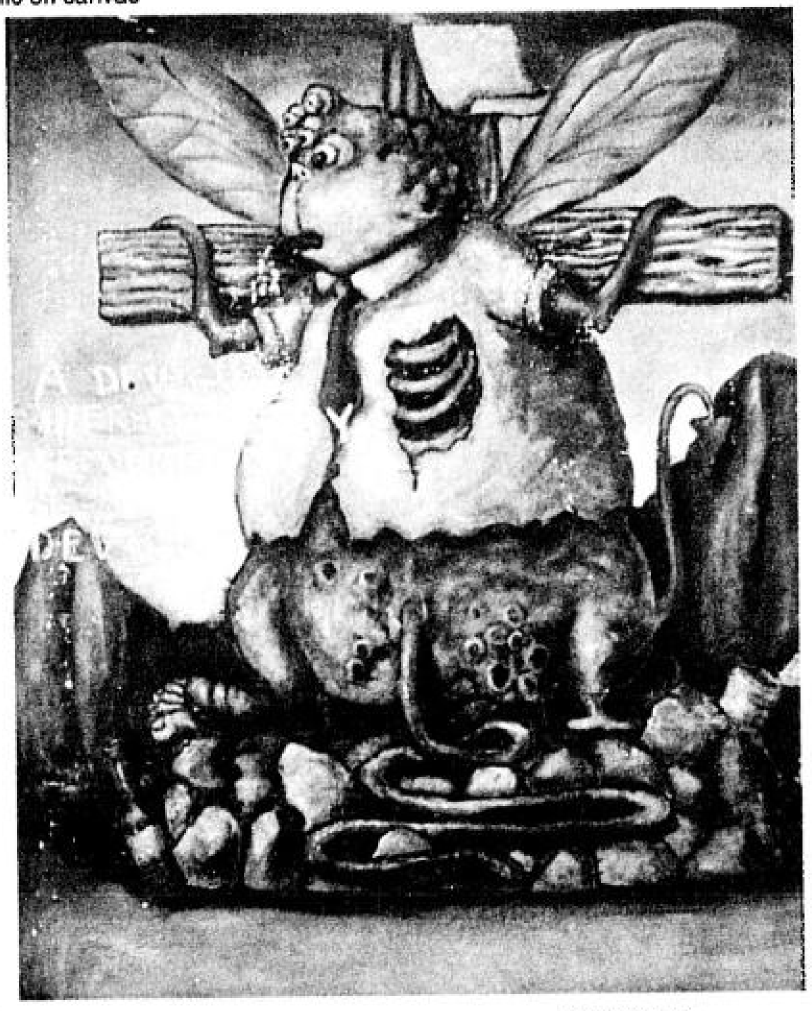
Though the Philippine Center is on Fifth Avenue, an exhibit opening there is not somewhere Filipino royals like the former first daughter can tarry.

To begin with, it is 10 blocks below the truly fashionable part of the avenue and too near the crass hub of Times Square. At the moment, the Center's façade is blighted by scaffolding which has been used by the neighboring business establishment as a mount for banners which advertise its merchandise of small-size women's wear. Missies, Petites, Juniors, it seems to taunt at the Philippine Mission.

Additionally, Filipino-ness as an identity has so plummeted from the realm of the "world-class" that for those with hopes of attaining some association with the tag, the identity cannot be avowed without some kind of makeup (or at least, extra-moisturization and exfoliation). And furthermore, pitted against the "world-class," the art shown at the Center is, shall we say, incoherent.

There is a painfully clear contrast between what is shown as art at the Center and what is even only considered as art in the larger center of art that is New-York City, where the Philippine Center is aimed at establishing the artistic talents of the people it represents, right there smack in the heart of the city, and not on its periphery, where ironically Ocampo has gained the greater attention. That contrast is defined by the repulsiveness of Ocampo's art to most Filipinos, and reciprocally by the repulsiveness of Philippine Center art to New York City's art center of Chelsea.

This dissonance stems from the inability of Philippine Center art to register a consciousness of its historical situatedness in an international or cross-cultural mode of artistic production, thus it falls from the conversation, in which Ocampo is a clear voice. To be less polite about it, Philippine Center-type art doesn't know its place; or perhaps (and worse), it knows it too well and acquiesces.


"A DEVICE Infrequently Recognized as a Device," acrylic on canvas

The Center has rules for showing there, which forbid displaying anything too sensitive or potentially controversial. The aim, one can be sure, is to showcase culture separate from materiality, in the "universal" and "independent" language of art, so that people on Fifth Avenue, on their way from Bergdorf's or the Plaza, can see for themselves the rich world of Pinoys, a world that exists beyond their abject destitution. The result, of course, is a joke.

Acute

This is not to suggest, however, that Ocampo's work is a programmatic critique of postcoloniality nor some cheap platform for identity politics. On the contrary, his sense of the deluding mechanism of coloniality and the historical fact of his upbringing in it is so acute it will not fall into the trap of thinking itself outside or above those very mechanisms.

Indeed, it is a sense of entrapment which frames the works and it is clear that the level of the "world-class" in which his art finds "achievement" is deemed but another form of coloniality. "A Moral Exorcism Meaningless Outside a Ritualistic Sense of Artistic Heroism" is the title of one of his canvases exhibited at Shainman, which neatly encapsulates the paroxysm-like self-consciousness of his work. The image is a macabre rendition of a storybook drawing of children, some of them with their eyeballs dangling from the sockets.

There is infinitely more to Ocampo's work than juvenile blow-offs of sanctity, the likes of which are often passed off as art (well, in the West, anyway) without much success. There is more a poetry which reaches the sublime in works like an untitled one featuring the thorns-crowned head of Christ with the body of a chicken with outstretched wings, each painted over with dripping Nazi swastikas. There is a jolting rush, a fluorescent vibrance and an inexplicable intuitive congruence in the juxtapositions which is sustained throughout his works and makes him the object of so much interest, this capacity to sustain such complex harmony in his cruel song.

Words such as these which attempt to encapsulate an ineffability, an apparent wordlessness, are the motif of Ocampo's latest work, as the artist's statement for the show explains: "... The whole process of translating images into letters and words is what f---s things up."

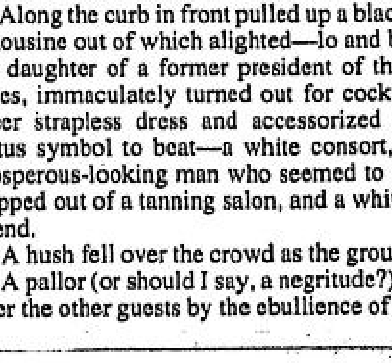
And yet, this mess opens a felicitous ground for inventive play. The recourse to words seems like a logical progression for Ocampo, an artist emerging from postcoloniality into an unexpected storm of words greeting his work and attempting to explain it, and thereby also subsume it. By jamming on catch phrases of art criticism, Ocampo is able not to escape but to maintain the dissonance between his work and the arena in which it plays.

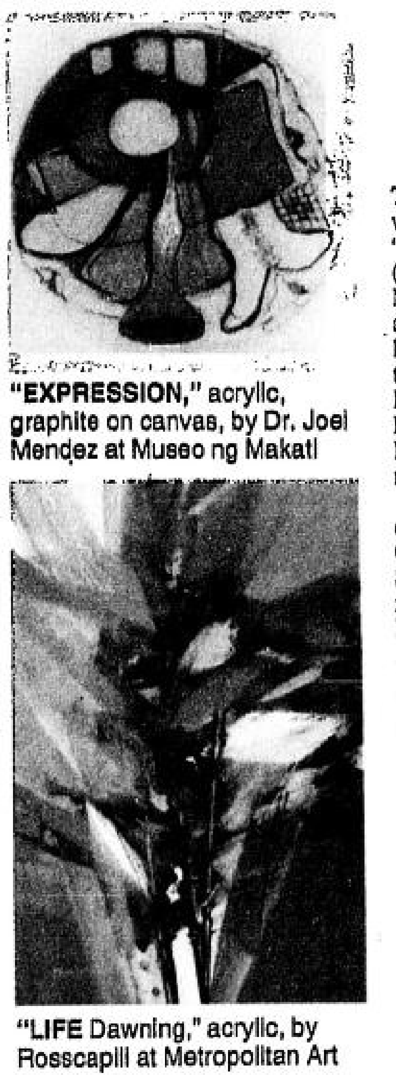
And, indeed, Ocampo's Shainman exhibit eludes any facile attempt to contain it within a political agenda. "The Unseen Power of the Monochrome" features sketches of Marx and Lenin in black and white contrasting with a vintage-style caricature of a naked black woman in full color.

"Monochrome" underscores the whiteness of the figures of Marx and Lenin and its tension with the voluptuous objectification of the "colored" woman. The work resonates against ideas of commodity fetishism, gender politics and raciality. But not in any straightforward way.

Clearly, the invocation of the historical, politico-economic, racial and ethno-national dimensions, which condition both the production and reading of Ocampo's works, stem from my view. But it is prompted by works, which countenance these dimensions in contrast to art that cannot figure these matters at all. In a later article, I will let the artist speak for himself.

'Guhit Kulit' at Museo ng Makati; Rosscapili at Metropolitan Art Gallery; Alcazaren at West Gallery


"EXPRESSION," acrylic, graphite on canvas, by Dr. Joel Mendez at Museo ng Makati


"LIFE Dawning," acrylic, by Rosscapili at Metropolitan Art Gallery

VISUAL ARTS

THE PHILIPPINE Drawing Society with the Weigh Less Center is holding "Guhit Kulit" at the Museo ng Makati (J.P. Rizal Street, Barangay Poblacion, Makati) up to March 16. Featured artists are Nunelucio Alvarado, Malang, Fil Delacruz, Manuel Baldemor, Marcel Antonio, Antonio Austria, Bencab, Joel Mendez, Elmer Borlongan, Dieter Korbanka, Ferdi Montemayor and Stella Rojas.

Also joining are Andres Barrioquinto, Ross Capili, Danioel Coquilla, Jaime delos Santos, Kiko Escora, Noel El Farol, Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Tony Leano, Raul Lebajo, Emma Navarro, Butch Payawal, Ami Soini and Ronald Ventura.

ROSSCAPILI SHOW. Rosscapili translates his passion for nature into the canvas in his 22nd one-man exhibit, "Abstract Romance," at the Metropolitan Art Gallery (SM Megamall) from March 1-15. The landscapes and seascapes, while appearing abstract, play around light and shade. They are almost like gardens, as light passes through leaves and form silhouettes out of which other colors appear. Call 631-6160 or 633-9789.

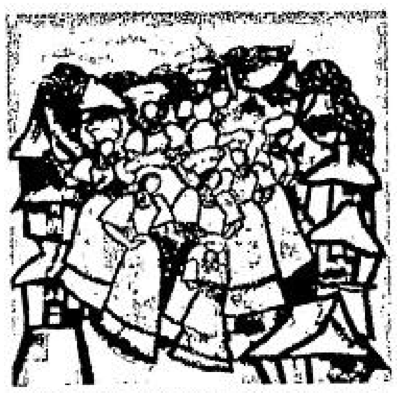
ALCAZAREN SHOW. Juan Alcazaren holds his first painting exhibit, "Left," at the West Gallery (SM Megamall). The large paintings are reminiscent of the artist's found-object sculptures: they make use of hundreds of cutout photographs from art magazines as takeoff points. The show runs from March 8-20. Call 634-1284.

TWO ARTISTS AT FINALE. Alfred B. Cruz Jr. and Alvin Villaruel, two up-and-coming artists, liven the art scene with "Still," their two-man exhibit at Finale Art Gallery (SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City) which runs from Feb. 27 to March 11.

The artists describe their works as "based on photographs of moving subjects and objects [presenting] a documentation of sequence and activity." The title refers to the similarity of painting to photography as to arrest the motion, to settle, contrasted with the motion picture.

FREUND AT THE FILIPINO BOOKSTORE. "Colors of the Sea," an exhibit featuring underwater photography by Jurgen Freund, will open on Feb. 28 at Tipunan (2/F The Filipino Bookstore, F. dela Rosa Street corner Katipunan, Loyola Heights, QC). The exhibit features original photographs of marine wildlife and coral reefs taken from the waters of the Indo-Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Seas. The exhibit will run until March 31. Call 899-4246 to 49.

"LIKHANG Kamay: Legacy 2001" exhibit-sale at the Gallery of The Peninsula Manila Hotel was formally opened on Feb. 19. Makati Mayor Elenita S. Binay cut the ribbon, assisted by the hotel's resident manager, Rudy Oretti. From left, Cora dela Fuente, Tony Cervantes, Gula Bautista, and Princess Monjierra Disini. At the back are Councilors Divina Jacome, Rudy Sese, Jing Espiritu and other city officials and guests.

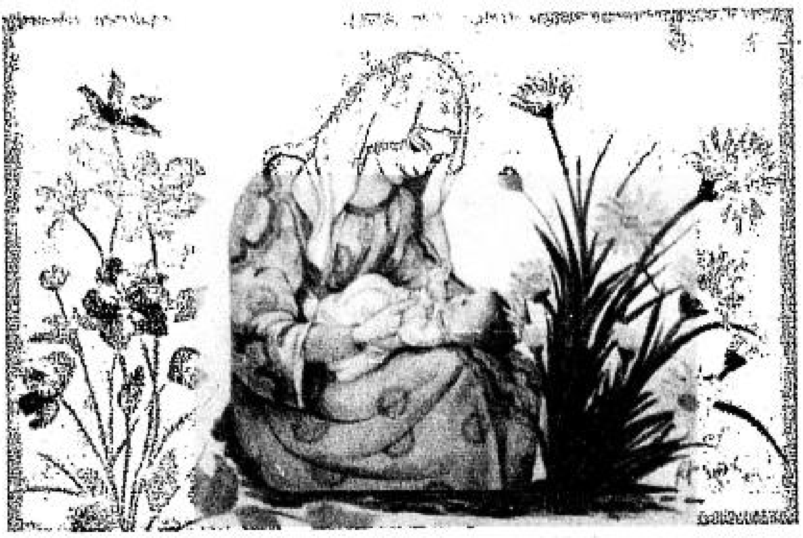

"TOWN Square" by Baldemor, on view from March 2-15 at the Art Space, 3/L Glorietta IV, Ayala Center, Makati City

NIEMIEC AT THE HEART CENTER. Filipino expatriate artist Annie de Asis Niemiec mounts her second solo exhibit dubbed "Matters of the Heart" at the Philippine Heart Center, East Avenue, QC, on March 5-17. The paintings, mostly in acrylic, are rendered as well in pastel and colored pencils.

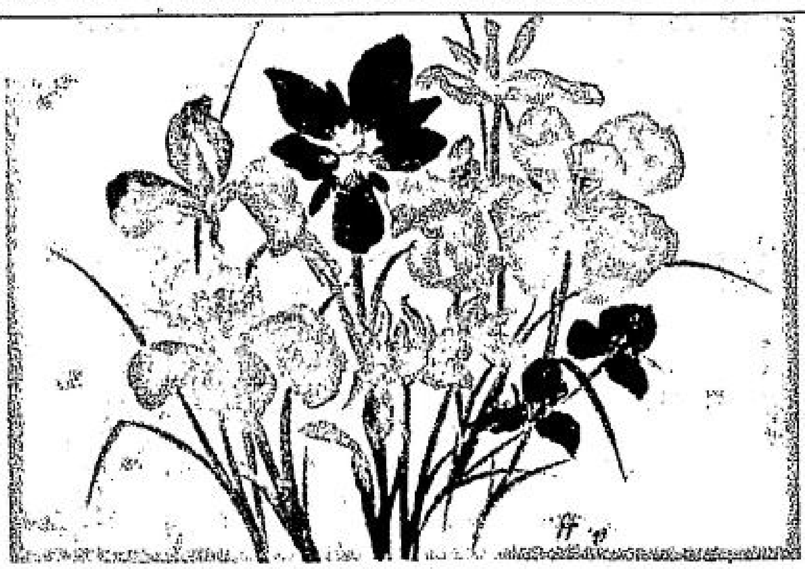
WELDON AT MAKATI. Denise Weldon will hold an exhibit of photographs featuring Iris prints in limited editions on March 3 at the Locsin Building corner Ayala and Makati Avenues, Makati City. The exhibit runs until March 22.

GROUP EXHIBIT. Sining Silingan, a joint exhibit featuring selected artists from the neighboring cities of Iligan and Cagayan de Oro in Mnidanao, is being held in celebration of the National Arts and Cul-

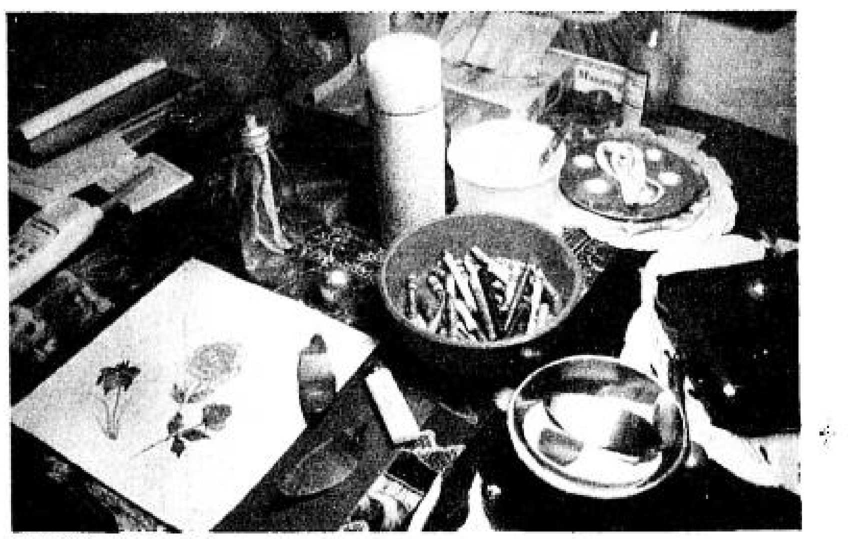
GUHIT/ p.D7



WILDFLOWERS and daffodils adorn the Blessed Mother.



FLOWERS bursting with simplicity and grace.



TOOLS of the craft

Remy Ignacio's grace-filled flowers

BY CATHY BABAO GUBALLA
PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

RELUCTANT ARTIST. Remy Ignacio

AS a young girl, Remy Ignacio had wanted to take up fine arts but was dissuaded by her mother who said it was not a practical course for a young woman to take. The talent and gift for art remained in the back burner for close to four decades as she was kept busy raising a brood of seven sons and one daughter. "I certainly had my hands full and had no time to think about art," she tells us. Her children, though, remember her eagerness to help out with art projects in school, and one son recalls doing "paint by the number" projects with her as a young boy.

Beginnings

Nine years ago, she was introduced by a relative to a nun, Sr. Josefa Reyes, who taught her the art of encausted wax, or simply put, as Remy likes to call it—"the art of melted crayons." She would make small pictures and cards and give them as gifts to friends and family. Two years ago, one such family friend, Louie Reyes, brought the piece of art to Malang. The noted artist was visibly impressed and he immediately took note of Remy's gift. "This lady should hold an exhibit," Remy recalls Malang saying, much to her disbelief. "He told Louie it was a talent that should not remain hidden."

Thus, she was encouraged by the same friend to come up with 30 paintings which they could exhibit and sell to benefit the church building activities of Our Lady of Pentecost Parish in Loyola Heights, QC. Remy soon found herself working early in the morning before heading off to morning mass. "Before I knew it, I had come up with 60 paintings." She humbly tells us.

Almost all paintings were sold out and raised a little over half a million pesos, seed money for Our Lady's church. "I could not believe that practically all of them were sold. I could not even afford to buy the paintings myself." She says with a smile, "The people behind it said the price was only commensurate to the value and quality of the work. But I would always tell people, don't think of it as buying a painting, think of it as giving to the church and getting a reward for it."

Art as therapy

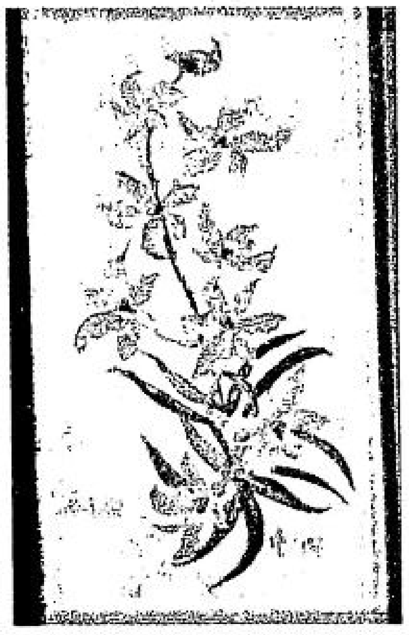
Remy's subjects are flowers in all forms, shapes and colors, and most of them adorn images of the Blessed Mother. "A lot of friends give me cards with pictures of the Blessed mother and what I do is I cut them out and adorn them with flowers." Most of the time, however, the subject are flowers alone as Remy has always loved flowers and would pay particular attention to the various types of flora she would see during travels abroad.

Immersing herself in her art has been very therapeutic. "I needed an outlet," she says. Husband Jess, bedridden and hooked to a respirator for close to four years now, has been in a state of stupor since a major asthma attack resulted in a cardiac arrest in June 1997. Remy devotedly attends to Jess' needs with the help of a full-time nurse, but when she has to get away, she hies off to her private retreat on the second floor of the family home. There she puts on some music and proceeds to create lovely pictures of flowers that are certain to bring joy to those who receive her highly personalized and intricately crafted pictures.

The tools of her craft are simple—used or broken crayons, most of which, she says, come from her grandchildren, a candle or bunsen burner, metal strips cut from good quality tin cans and shaped into leaves or petals, and acrylic spray. In the quiet of her room, she creates the most beautiful and exquisite flowers with deftness and skill. It's a very simple art form but requires the gift and grace of hands that can transform something as mundane as melted crayons into delicate, intricate flowers that burst forth with color. Occasionally, when her schedule allows it, Remy gives lessons to small groups interested in learning this particular art form.

"It always feels good to be able to give something of yourself." For someone who has devoted the best years of her life to family, Remy's pictures radiate with the selflessness and genteel grace of its creator.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph



GENTLE flowers from a genteel lady

'Guhit Kulit' . . .

(From page D6)

ture Month. The exhibit runs until March 8. Participating artists include Rahuel Antonio, Michael Bacol, Errol Balcos, Rey Bollozos, Nonoy Estarte, Oscar Floirendo, Christopher Gomez, Jaime An Lim, Kurt Lluch, Ivan Macarambon, Jing Manalo, Ely Neri, Lea Padilla, Cris Rollo, Rhine Sahagun, Bet Vementa and Jake Vementa.

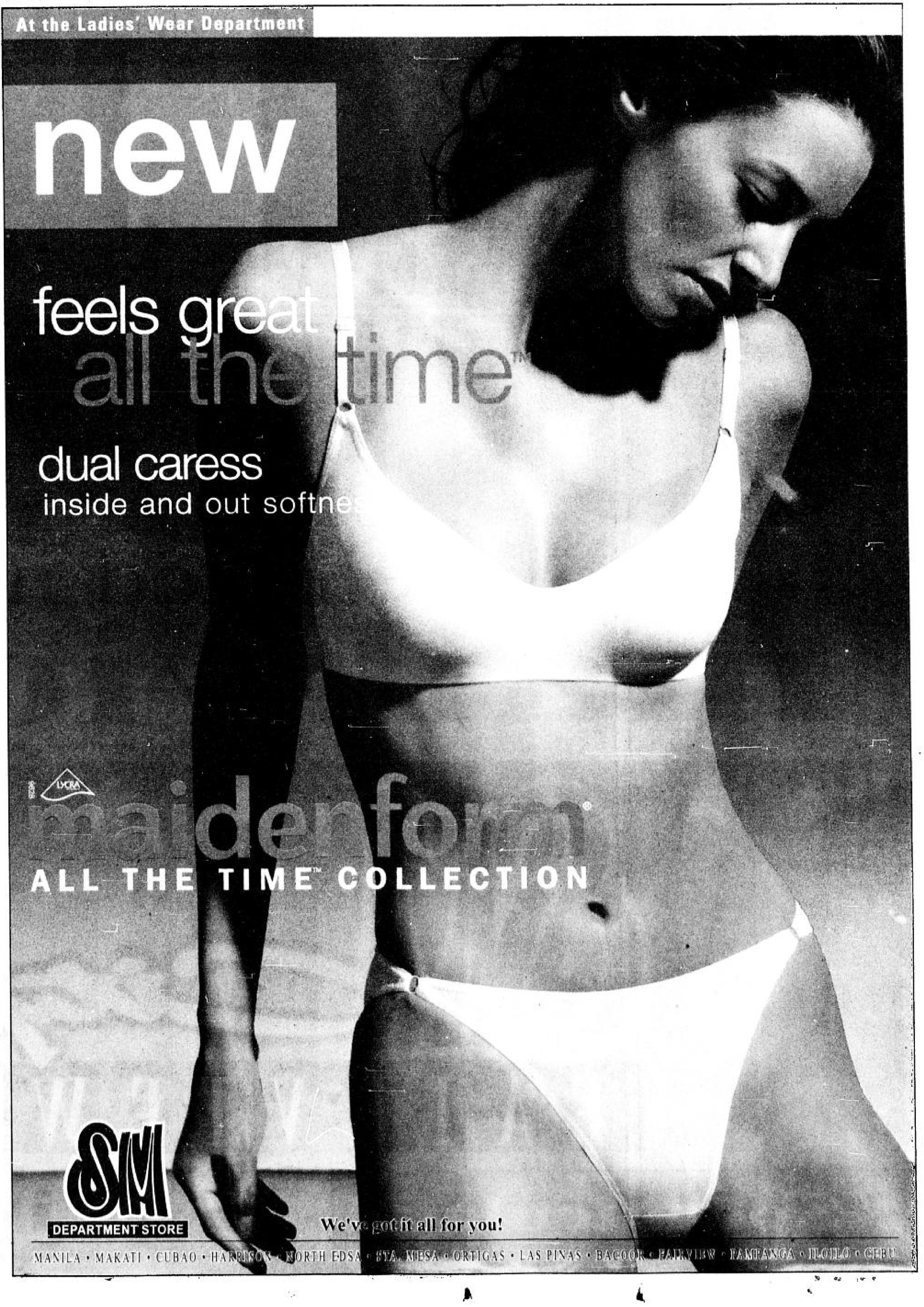
ABAD AT SM ART CENTER AND FINALE ART GALLERY. Pacita Abad will mount her latest exhibit dubbed "The Sky is the Limit" in two venues (SM Art Center and Finale Art Gallery), from March 13-26. Pacita was inspired by her sojourn to Rajasthan, India where she was dazzled by the native women's jewelry and costumes. The patterns and mirrorwork on the sensuous saris of the women struck her as virtually walking pieces of art. Call 634-2410 to 11.

PADILLA AT GALLERY 5 DAVAO. Lea Padilla opens her exhibit of recent paintings, "Promised Land, Broken Land," at Gallery 5, 5/L (JSCitimall in Davao City), on March 5. The works, done in large and medium scale in oil and acrylic, depict the Maranaos of the Lanao province of Mindanao. The exhibit runs until March 28.

MET'S TRAVELING SHOW. The Metropolitan Museum of Manila will present its traveling show, "K na K: Heroics from Philippine Narratives," at the Assumption College in Makati from March 5-9. Thirty-five colorful, original works by members of the Ilustrador ng Kabataan will be featured. The collection focuses on Philippine values and traits and indigenous literature. Call 523-7855.

ART CONTEST. Join this year's Likhang Sining, an art competition at the Ayala Museum, on March 10. Organized by the Rotary Club of Makati West for the Rotary International District 3830, Likhang Sining is open to all high school students. Entrants must be sponsored by a Rotary Club or an Interact club of the school where they are enrolled. The first, second and third prize winners will each receive cash prize and a trophy. Interested parties may obtain and submit their entry forms at the nearest Rotary office or at the Ayala Museum. Deadline of submission of entry forms is on March 8. Call 812-1191 to 97 local 126/ 840-1588 (fax) or 832-3018, 551-3025 (fax).

TRADITIONAL FILIPINO HOUSES. The Metropolitan Museum of Manila with the Museo De La Salle of Dasmarinas, Cavite, presents the traveling show "Wood, Stones and Shells: Traditional Filipino Houses," until March 14. This exhibit features black-and-white photographs by Neal Oshima presenting traditional colonial Spanish and American wood-and-stone sculpture houses from several towns in the Philippines. This show also demonstrates excellence in Philippine architecture. Call 523-7855.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Performing for change at Edsa

BY AUDIE GEMORA

OF STAGE

PEOPLE Power II on Edsa will go down in history as another phenomenon!

What will never be mentioned is the active—almost pivotal—participation of artists in this history-changing event. And yet, they were there—uncalled, unbidden, but there in full force! Their songs filled the air.

"Do you hear the people sing/ singing the song of angry men?/ It is the music of a people who will not be slaves again./ When the beating of your heart/ echoes the beating of the drums,/ there's a life about to star

PERFORMING/ p.E2

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Performing for change at Edsa

(From page E1)

when tomorrow comes."

It didn't matter that the multitude at the Edsa Shrine did not know the lyrics to "Do You Hear the People Sing." When John Arcilla, J.M. Rodriguez, Dianne dela Fuente, Carlo Orosa, Trumpets and I sang the haunting refrain of that beautiful song from the musical "Les Miserables," people were all ears knowing almost instinctively that the song was their "anthem" and echoed the sentiments of People Power II.

For four sleepless nights, theater folk joined the different sectors of society at the Shrine and lent their support and talents in every possible way. The very first night, even before the exceptional text brigade kicked off the noise barrage and drew over 3,000 people to the Edsa Shrine, theater colleagues were already there.

The experience reminded me of a sequence in "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," when individuals heeded a call by an unexplained force and found themselves at the foot of a mountain. Like them, we found ourselves at the foot of the Shrine, standing there till the wee hours of the morning, smarting over what the 11 Judas senators did at the impeachment trial.

Deafening

The deafening "Erap resign!" battle-cry swelled through the sea of people, punctuated every so often by derisive chants against the senators who voted to suppress the truth. Underneath the uniquely Filipino humor was a fury so intense it would take a lot more than five days to dissipate. In fact, by the fifth day it was just gathering steam!

In the swelling, indignant crowd, I saw Behn Cervantes, OPM president Mitch Valdes, Pinky Marquez, and a number of stage actors. Artista Para sa Pagbabago ng Pilipinas led by Jim Paredes, Leah Navarro, Joey Reyes, Maan Hontiveros were there in full force. I'm pretty sure the Concerned Artists of the Philippines were present, too. Youngsters from ABS-CBN's Star Circle mixed with the masses, content to be part of the crowd.

Anti-Erap forces took their cue and rode the wheels of the revolution. Artists were quickly put to task. The next day, Freddie Santos called together the Trumpets talents and announced that Behn Cervantes was requesting theater groups to help entertain the weary rallyists. We quickly came up with a program and went to the Shrine.

By nightfall, the crowd had grown to about a hundred thousand. The closest cars could park was all the way in Emerald Avenue. Approaching the Shrine we heard Kuh Ledesma singing "Bayan Ko," followed by Tessie Tomas and Jon Santos who spoofed Erap and his ilk. I bumped into Cynthia Patag who was among the very first to join anti-Erap rallies like the Ayala demonstrations against constitutional change in 1998.

Artists and politicians were holed up in a cordoned-off area on the second floor of the Shrine. There was already such a long guest list by the time we got there that it took a while before our group could have its turn onstage. It was tough enough getting to the VIP area, cutting through the crowd to get to the stage area was even harder.

People everywhere

But once there you had the most incredible view—people everywhere! On the flyovers, at every nook and cranny of the Edsa-Ortigas intersection. The night air was charged with such incredible energy. Never mind that Danny Javier, who had been valiantly emceeing the proceedings all day, looked exhausted and sounded terribly hoarse. He had the throng dancing on his palm. Together they chanted, cheered and sang parodies about the corrupt personalities identified with the Erap administration.

Carlo Orosa began our portion with the inspirational "Magsimula Ka." Pam Gumabon and the rest of the Trumpets family lifted everyone's spirit by singing worship songs from "Joseph the Dreamer." I chose to sing "Impossible Dream" from "Man of La Mancha" and was totally taken aback when everyone sang along! Imagine a chorus of 100,000 singing, "To be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause."

Peta came after us complete with props and performed a rousing nationalistic number, egged on by one of their founders, Cecille Guidote Alvarez, who had earlier eloquently read a funny albeit seething poem directed to the disgraced president. They were already exhausted from hours of giving street performances in the crowd itself, but you couldn't tell that from their spirited performance.

> God made sure People Power II happened because the first one might have changed the government but hardly changed people's corrupt hearts. I believe the dramatic turn of events that led artists to the Edsa Shrine might have initiated that change

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

The action certainly wasn't limited to the stage area. I checked out the flyovers and bumped into AAI's Bart Guingona, Michael Williams and Dodo Lim. Karla Guitierrez and Jay Glorioso of Philippine Opera Company were there, too.

Ditto with members of the Repertory Philippines who had set up a nice little picnic on the pavement. No wonder, the people up there had the best view of the stage and the spectators surrounding the Shrine.

Fabulous view

At that time Jim Paredes had engaged the crowd to do Apo's famous wave. The view from the top was fabulous! You would never have guessed we were in the eye of the storm. People Power II was a political rally, show, street party, carnival, *lamay*, worship crusade all rolled into one!

All around there were all kinds of street art—graffitti, chalk drawings of Erap, uncomplimenting but hilarious computer renderings of the infamous senators, art installations (mock tombstones for the same), performance art, people walking around in costumes, games (a bunch of young guys blocked passing vehicles forcing male and female passengers to kiss each other before being let through). It was so much fun I couldn't wait to see what was in store for all of us the next day. I wasn't disappointed.

Whoever came up with the idea to form a human chain from the Ninoy statue on Ayala Avenue all the way to the Shrine should be directing for the theater. Philstage president Celeste Legaspi, who's asthmatic, braved the fumes and came with family in tow. Gary V., Mon Faustino and the Genesis staff also linked up and lit candles in front of Megamall.

Crowds continued to grow around the Shrine Thursday evening. The VIP area was spilling over with entertainers, directors and production people who didn't necessarily want to go onstage but were there just to add their presence. Resident companies from the CCP came. Tanghalang Pilipino performed patriotic songs from musicals "Walang Sugat," "Ilustrado" and "Aguinaldo: 1898." Ballet Philippines expressed their indignation through a modern piece.

I was pleasantly surprised to see the cast of "Miss Saigon" there! We all know the P450-million production was produced by the "Second Family" so they were in effect putting their jobs on the line by being at an anti-Erap rally. "As long as we are doing our jobs well onstage what we do as Filipinos offstage is our business," said a member. They were not able to perform onstage that evening. However, on Friday night, they joined the Singapore-bound cast of "Rent" in a spirited rendition of "Seasons of Love." Repertory Philippines' president Zeneida Amador sent a young contingent to sing a "Prayer" medley.

And I must say that I was very happy to see a lot of film, TV, recording and sports personalities at Edsa II. I share Conrad de Quiros' exasperation over "stars" who take advantage of their popularity and enter politics not to serve but be served. But this time around there were enough (especially young) celebrities who broke away from their show-biz fraternities and made a stand against a former actor-president, who had become the biggest crook in the land, to convince me that show-biz people are not a hopeless breed.

And there were certainly a lot of people, especially those in theater who had nothing to gain, and in fact might have had something to lose had the tide gone the other way—by being there and performing there. It was a chance to be heard, to be able to say we are Filipinos, too and we care about this country!

God made sure People Power II happened because the first one might have changed the government but hardly changed people's corrupt hearts. I believe the dramatic turn of events that led artists to the Edsa Shrine might have initiated that change. I know as an artist I will never sit back and apathetically allow the sins of the past to revisit us again.

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Tribute to Maningning Miclat

EDNA Zapanta-Manlapaz, executive director of the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings (Aliww), thought Maningning C. Miclat's interest in Aliww's archival work unusual for someone in her 20s. Maningning would come to Aliww often, bringing her poems and other papers for safekeeping in its archive.

It was as though she were racing against time and wanted to make sure her works would be in good hands. She was a painter, poet and essayist who wrote in three languages. She also did Chinese calligraphy. She even spoke to Zapanta-Manlapaz about mounting a one-woman show.

On Sept. 29 last year, Maningning Miclat fell to her death. She was only 28, but she left behind a remarkable body of work—in literature and the visual arts.

On March 1 at 3 p.m., she returns to Aliww through posthumous exhibitions of her art and her writing. The twin events, Aliwws tribute to a gifted young woman, is its way of opening Women's Month.

Seventeen of Miclat's paintings, including "Trouble in Paradise," which won the grand prize in the 1992 Art Association of the Philippines competition, will be exhibited in the Pardo de Tavera Room of the Ateneo de Manila University's Rizal Library.

National Artist for Sculpture Napoleon Abueva will cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the exhibit, which is being curated by Roberto Chabet. Abueva has done a death mask of Miclat, his first since 1983 when he made a death mask of the late senator Ninoy Aquino.

At Aliww's Reading Room will be exhibited three of Miclat's poems in Mandarin which she wrote on Chinese calligraphy scrolls, as well as her poems in English and Filipino as chosen by her fellow poets Benilda Santos and Marjorie Evasco. Four of the poems will be performed, the fourth in song by Maningning's only sibling, Banawe.

NCCA executive director Virgilio Almario will open the literary exhibition.

Lending a touch of poignancy to the event will be the installation in the Reading Room of Maningning's own writing desk.

Mario and Alma Miclat will cap the program with recollections of their daughter.

Attendance at the twin events on March 1 will be strictly by invitation, but the exhibits will be open to the public until March 15.

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES STAGES THORNTON WILDER'S 'OUR TOWN'
Thornton Wilder's heartening literary classic, "Our Town," opened at the William J. Shaw Theater at the Shangri-La Plaza on Feb. 22. Winner of the 1938 Pulitzer Prize, it is one of the most frequently performed plays of the 20th century. Directed by Anton Juan, the Repertory Philippines' production stars Baby Barredo, Miguel Faustmann, Joy Virata and Meynard Peñalosa. Assistant director is Zeneida Amador. It will run at the Shaw Theatre until March 11 and at the Carlos P. Romulo Theater of the RCBC Plaza in Makati from March 15-25. Call 633-4821 to 25.

Philippine-Japan Festival at Shangri-La Plaza

DESIGNED by Virginia Pantaleon of Sogetsu School Ikebana Visions 2001

IKEBANA exhibit and lecture demos, critically acclaimed films from Japan's respected directors and a cartoon exhibition featuring works of veteran cartoonists around Asia mark Shangri-La Plaza Mall's celebration of the annual Philippine-Japan Festival.

The festival opens with Eiga Sai 2001, a weeklong filmfest from Feb. 28 to March 4, featuring a powerful lineup of Japan's cinema greats by respected directors Akira Kurosawa, Kon Ichikawa, Yasujiro Ozu, Yoji Yamada, Yoshitaro Nomura, Keisuki Knoshita, Yuzo Kawashima and Seijun Suzuki.

The film festival, held in cooperation with the Japan Foundation Manila Office, aims not only to entertain, but also expose the Filipino audience to a variety of film plots, directorial styles and acting prowess. Twelve critically acclaimed films, representative of masterpieces of the directors, will be featured for free to the viewing public with three to four screenings daily at the Cinema 2 of the mall. All of the films were rated high by the Kinema Junpo, Japan's most respected film review magazine.

Noteworthy are Kurosawa's "The Hidden Fortress" (the inspiration behind the making of George Lucas' "Star Wars"); Kinoshita's "24 Eyes" (garnered most of the film awards in 1954 and said to have been the only film in Japanese history where the people shed the most tears); Ichikawa's "The Makioka Sisters" (produced in 1983, it is the third film version of a famous novel by Junichiro Tanizaki), and Ozu's "An Autumn Afternoon" (Ozu's last work, a must-see for film buffs).

Flower art enthusiasts will be delighted to see "Ikebana Visions 2001" from March 2-4, the 34th annual exhibit of the Ikebana International Manila Chapter, bringing together participants from various provincial chapters in Davao, Cagayan de Oro and Cebu at the mall's Grand Atrium. Highlight will be the free lecture demonstrations daily on the styles and techniques of different ikebana schools to include the Ikenobo, Ohara, Ryusie-ha and Sogetsu.

Capping the mall's celebration is the 4th Asian Cartoon Exhibition from March 7 to April 15 at the Shaw side lobby featuring 90 humorous and satirical cartoons highlighting the various scenarios and events in Asia in the 1990s. Cartoon artworks from 10 veteran cartoonists from nine countries, namely China (Miao Yin Tang), India (Mario de Miranda), Indonesia (G.M. Sudarta), Japan (Kusahara Takao and Morita Kenji), Korea (Kim Song-Hwan), Malaysia (Lat), Myanmar (Aw Pi Kyeh), Thailand (Anop Kitichaiwan) and the Philippines (Roni Santiago) will be on display. The show will have two parts depicting social changes in the nations during the economic growth period from 1990 to 1997 (Part 1) and situations after the Asian economic crisis triggered in Thailand in Thailand in summer, 1997 (second part).

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Remarkable concerts before and after Edsa II

By Pablo A. Tariman

TWO nights before Edsa II, the concerts to remember were the PPO concert with pianist Ariel Dechosa as soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 ("The Emperor") under the baton of Chino Toledo and the solo recital of Korean flutist Hae Won Shin.

Dechosa was in good form and all throughout the three movements, he unleashed the luminous essence of the Beethoven concerto with dazzling virtuosity. Toledo kept up with the tempo set by the soloist and the result was a vintage "Emperor" never heard from earlier interpreters.

On the night the country was watching with bated breath the opening or non-opening of the bank envelops, Korean flutist Hae Won Shin, assisted by pianist J. Greg Zuniega, made an auspicious Manila debut in an evening of Bach, Poulenc, Kreisler and Bizet at the Francisco Santiago Hall.

The Bach Sonata in E Flat Major was a revelation, the Poulenc Sonata revved up a dazzling jazz rhythm and her "Carmen Fantasie" left no doubt about her being a flute virtuoso.

A post-Edsa II concert of the PPO spotlighted cellist Wilfredo Pasamba as soloist in Haydn's Cello Concerto in D Major under the baton of Delfin Colomé.

Pasamba didn't use his 18th-century instrument and played on one made by Amador Tamayo. It didn't make any difference as Pasamba delineated the most impetuous demand of the concerto to brilliant results. Colomé had rapport with the soloist.

The orchestra opened with the world premiere of Benito Lauret's Suite Filipina for Orchestra. This is one piece that would have raised uproar in a composition class but being a gift from a Spanish composer to the Philippines, one would be bound to accept the work for what it is—a medley of Filipino folk favorites with several measures from the National Anthem to boot.

The second season concert of the National Philharmonic Society featuring soprano Rachelle Gerodias and tenor Lemuel de la Cruz ended in a standing ovation. Clearly, the two faculty mambers of the UST Conservatory of Music deserved it.

Gerodias was incandescent in the Schumann art songs (Mondnacht, Intermezzo and Liebeslied) and earned a roar of applause in Gounoud's "Ah! Je veeux vivre" (from "Romeo and Juliet"). Her duet with De la Cruz ("Caro elisir" from "Elisir d'amore") revealed a radiant Adina (she is due to sing this role in Hong Kong next month).

But the evening clearly revealed the new vocal artistry of tenor De la Cruz. His opening aria ("Ecco ridente" from "Barber of Seville") sparkled with bouncy rhythm of Rossini but he was even more revealing in the art song section.

De Falla's "Tus Ojilos Negros" was a gem of rendition but it was Obrador's "Del cabello mas sutil" that took the breath away.

Vocal power isn't one of De la Cruz's assets but his intelligent use of his voice will get him far. He stunned not with awesome vocal power but with subtle seduction. Even a Webber song like "Music of the Night" suddenly acquired a touch of class in his interpretation.

ARIEL Dechosa

RACHELLE Gerodias

The pianist, Najib Ishmael, is surely one of our sensitive accompaniments and the triumph of De la Cruz and Gerodias that night was partly due to his keyboard competence.

Here and there

CECILE Licad, who will close the PPO season on April 6 as soloist of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, will be conducted by Ruggero Barbieri. Other pieces in this program are Scriabin's "The Poem of Ecstacy" Op. 45 and Jeffrey Ching's "Filipino Overture." The last time Licad played this concerto in Manila was in the mid-'80s before she got married. Her interpretation of the piece now is worth watching. How we wish she would also figure in a solo recital. Her new all-Chopin (containing the Op. 25 etudes) repertoire is the rave of New York, Washington, D.C. and Boston. How I wish a generous music patron would sponsor this solo concert and mount a series of "healing" concerts in the countryside. Or couldn't CCP do this? If you are paying a business-class ticket for a world-class pianist, why not maximize her stay and share her talent with music lovers from the provinces with a less expensive solo concert?

* * *

The concerts not to be missed are the March 8 solo recital of Japanese violinist Atsuko Temma at the CCP Little Theater and the March 14 and 27 return engagements of Romanian violin superstar Alexander Tomescu at the Meralco Theater. He will be soloist in two big concertos—the Mendelssohn and the Tchaikovsky favorites. Both Tomescu and Temma were top winners of the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud competitions in Paris and were both warmly received in Russia.

* * *

Vancouver-based Filipina soprano Elaine Lee placed second in the voice competition sponsored by the Vancouver Women's Music Club held at the Vancouver Unitarian church. There were 20 participants and eight of the finalists came from the University of British Columbia where Lee is presently enrolled. Her winning pieces were art songs by Hahn and John Duke and an aria from Don Pasquale. This is not the first she figured well in competitions. The last time she won, her winning piece was Verdi's "Caro Nome" from "Rigoletto." When I heard her sing it in Manila, she was perfectly in command. Lee is all set for her orchestral debut in Manila on July 14 at the Philamlife Theater with the Manila Festival Orchestra under the baton of Nonoy Diestro, the first Filipino to figure prominently in international competitions for conductors in Europe.

* * *

Farida Kabayao, the violinist-daughter of Gilopez and Corazon Kabayao, has turned to theater. She played Anne in "The Diary of Anne Frank" staged at the new CAP Auditorium in Iloilo City. This is the first time I went to a theater with the Kabayao family without a music agenda. More on her next week.

Aside from the Kabayaos, the other prominent Ilonggos in the arts are tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, baritone Gamaliel Viray, actor Audie Gemora and Germany-based Filipina pianist Ma. Luisa Lopez Vito. The pianist is the sister of former Rep. Rafael Lopez Vito who is running for mayor of Iloilo City under the Liberal Party banner, which includes reelectionist councilor Benjie Gengos Jr.

* * *

The music used in the highly acclaimed Marilou Diaz-Abaya films such as "Sa Pusod Ng Dagat," "Rizal" and "Muro-Ami" by award-winning musical scorer Nonong Buencamino should be a collector's item for film buffs. How I wish GMA Films would issue a CD of the scores soon.

* * *

Another promising violinist from the Philippine High School for the Arts is Angela Rose Calimon who had her graduation recital last Feb. 11 at the Francisco Santiago Hall. She belongs to the 2001 Nick Joaquin class.

* * *

Remember Russian violinist Vladimir Spivakov who wowed Manila audiences with his Tchaikovsky and Beethoven concertos in the late '70s and early '80s? He will conduct the Russian National Orchestra in its debut at the Lincoln Center next month.

* * *

Erratum: The Italian word "concertare" from which the word "concerto" originated was misspelled as "concentrate" in my copy last week. My apologies to the Italian community.

Romanian violinist Tomescu to perform with National Philharmonic Society

THE BRILLIANT Romanian violin virtuoso Alexander Tomescu, hailed by the Berlin Morning Post as the "Romanian violin superstar," will make his third Philippine visit as he brings down the curtains to the National Philharmonic Society's 40th regular season with a colossal night of violin concertos on March 27, 7:30 p.m., at the Meralco Theater, Pasig City.

The 24-year-old whiz will play two admired and breathtaking classics—the Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky violin concertos—under the baton of international conductor Redentor Romero.

A graduate of the famed Bucharest Conservatory of Music, Tomescu began playing the violin at the age of 6. At 8, this prodigy was already performing in public and reaping international awards left and right. To date, he lists at least 24 major citations, including grand prize honors at the prestigious and tough Paganini and Enescu violin competitions, and also the Yehudi Menuhin Gold Medal through which he rose to global prominence.

As a touring musician, Tomescu's soulful interpretations of the great classics—including Philippine favorites—as well as his technical wizardry have earned for him the acclaim and admiration of music enthusiasts and critics. He has displayed his instrumental flair in recital or as soloist of the world's finest orchestras in no less than 20 countries, counting the United States, Russia, Great Britain, Austria, Switzerland, France, Korea and Japan, among others.

Tomescu has also embarked on highly successful TV, radio and CD recordings in his homeland and in other countries. Concertos, sonatas and hundreds of other classic and contemporary pieces comprise his vast and still expanding repertoire. And ever the perfectionist, he is currently fitting in his hectic international concertizing schedule while pursuing his master's degree in music.

Tomescu will also perform in a recital under the auspices of the United Architects of the Philippines on March 14 at the Equitable-PCIBank's Francisco Santiago Hall, and on March 16 in Cebu City, under the sponsorship of the Cebu Arts Council.

Tickets are now available at the Philharmonic office at Unit 2017, Cityland 10 Tower I, 156 H.V. de la Costa St., Makati City, tel. 815-2651, 817-2601, 810-7982/7988 or fax 815-3483; e-mail natmonic@mozcom.com. Other ticket outlets are Rustan's branches, SM Ticketnet, the Landmark, Greenbelt and TicketWorld outlets at National Bookstore branches and Robinsons Department Stores.

Lear the Great and Hamlet-lite

By Cora Llamas

REVIEWS

THERE'S one good reason William Shakespeare, with his poetic language and dramatic discourse, still gets staged in these days when the written word is fast giving way to visual bombardment. He still speaks to a modern audience.

Two of his greatest tragedies—"King Lear," a joint production of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and the World Theater Project (WTP), and Tanghalang Pilipino's "Hamlet"—played to enthusiastic crowds at the CCP recently.

Making this more remarkable is the fact that both were performed in English and traditional Western garb, just when it has become trendy to make the Bard more appealing to a younger audience by presenting him in Tagalog translations.

Vintage Shakespeare

In both productions, there are no attempts to reexamine the prevailing ideas or values of Shakespeare and his times, and then transpose these into alternative universes. What the audience gets is pure Shakespeare. Period.

Ultimately, both plays still stand up to now. Human nature and the human condition after all have not changed drastically in centuries. Jockeying for government power and the instability this causes the country are the hot topics after Edsa II. In "King Lear" and "Hamlet," the human elements that build to such social, political, and even moral upheaval are brilliantly exposed and dissected.

Laws are revoked and monarchs are deposed by all-too-human individuals subject to anger, greed and indecision. But politics does not obscure the moral polarities. Amid the chaos and turbulence, Shakespeare makes a clear line dividing black from white, the ethical from the evil. The characters dance around these lines, driving the audience to ask, "Where are truth and justice in all these?"

'King Lear'

At the end, flames devour the canvas of the stage where the image of a pseudo-eye—or is it Lear's homeland?—hang. They cry for the needed national purification—or warn of impending wars.

Anton Juan makes his "King Lear" an epic. Many Shakespearean productions in Manila cut in size Shakespeare's sense of grandeur because of budget constraints. A handful of actors in togas, strutting on an almost bare stage, does not an empire make. Unintentionally, the drama is reduced to the personal level; and while the conspiracies and passions do make for an intense theater experience, they do not seem likely to affect the national scope, as the text and setting might imply.

Juan restores the sense of grandeur by freeing Tanghalang Tolentino from stage clutter. An islet at the middle, a drawbridge that opens and closes at the side, and colorless dying plants hanging all over stretch it to a wide expanse. A plethora of changing colors reflects the raging emotions that drive the players into damnation or salvation. Then when the storm echoing Lear's madness and the treachery of his daughters breaks, a haunting mist literally descends over the stage.

The magnitude highlights the steep fall of Lear (Zeneida Amador). Amador is a ball of fire on stage, a tired old king exploding from indignation to madness, unbowed even in his insanity. And when he/she repents, the embers of his/her grief seethe.

SCENE from Tanghalang Pilipino's "Hamlet"

ZENEIDA Amador is a ball of fire as "King Lear."

Two productions of the Bard's tragedies stick to the old conventions—English blank verses and traditional costumes—and show that the original is still the best

Still, this is not entirely a one-man show. Juan surrounds his star player with a formidable supporting cast who actually look and sound comfortable in their period costumes and dialogue, not an easy task.

Convincing cast

The long text, cut to three hours, wisely focuses on the drama in two families, Lear's and Gloucester's (Paul Holme). Betrayal is ably embodied by Goneril, Nieves Campa's matronly peacock making up for lost time, and her nastier, sexier sister Regan (Pinky Amador). While Richard Joson is repulsive as the opportunistic Cornwall, Jaime del Mundo's Edmond is deliciously evil. This actor-director-writer behind wholesome stage fare like "The Little Mermaid" does a complete turn-around. His character shines with a scheming intelligence and a cold inner strength that would give an enemy pause.

The good guys hold their own. Juan sees to it that his colorful villains do not overpower the heroes in stage presence or performance power. Paolo Fabregas once again lends his good looks and earnest demeanor that canonized him in "Francis" to the noble Edgar. Paul Holme makes his subtle Gloucester a staunch pillar of authority, counterpointing Amador's intensity. Miguel Vasquez transforms his Fool into a sage. Only Jeremy Domingo's outraged Albany, who tries to rectify his wife Goneril's wrongs, seems overwhelmed by the turn of events.

Ana Abad Santos-Bitong's Cordelia remains pure from naïve beginning to tragic end. While the original text only makes her appear sporadically during the sturm und drang, Maritoni Tordesillas, dancing as her spirit, makes sure the audience never forgets her. The betrayal of her innocence and idealism plunges Lear's kingdom into chaos. At the end, as her dead body is carried out, the audience gets no assurance for better things.

The burning flames can only ask, "Why this? What happens now?"

'Hamlet'

It's easy to listen to TP's "Hamlet." The cast—composed of the theater company's senior actors and student performers from the University of Asia and the Pacific—speak their Shakespearean English with clarity and in the right cadence.

Dumol obviously intended to make this production speak to a contemporary audience. A Tagalog introduction, culled from some lines of the play, made by some of the players bids the audience welcome. A casually dressed Horatio (Timito delos Reyes), the title character's best friend, acts as the storyteller and the bridge to the viewers.

Within the close, dark confines of Batute, bathed in main colors black and red, Nic Manahan makes this production a young man's war against the world, the powers that be and life itself. His rage at his father's death and his mother's remarriage makes him emotionally unstable. Soon, unlike most "Hamlet" interpretations which highlight its camouflage aspects, his distemper—or "madness"—appears all too real. Claudius (played by Nic's real-life father, Bonggoy) has good reason to be scared for his life.

A young man's war

Dumol, too, edited the text, narrowing the drama to Hamlet's inner struggle. Nineteen-year-old Manahan gives the part a valiant try, which is hard enough for any professional actor. His intensity builds up, drops a little at the middle, and finishes with a flourish at the end. Laertes and Ophelia (Andre Tiangco and Monica Llamas, respectively) are also played by student actors.

The over-all effect is rather mixed: while they don't have character nuances expected from the more mature actors, the impulsiveness and rashness with which these youths lose their tempers or their sanity is believable.

It is refreshing to see the actors stay in character throughout the play. In most Shakespeare productions, while one actor speaks, the others just look at him. They also tend to leave the room in silence. In this production, Dumol adds small, but realistic touches. Rosencratz and Guildenstern arguing even as they leave. Claudius and Gertrude waving at the adoring crowd before the play-within-the-play opens.

What makes this production disturbing is Carlo Carino's Ghost. A constant nightmare like him would provoke any man to lose his sense of balance. His obvious thirst for blood raises questions, considering the elder Manahan's too nice king. This calm, reflective Claudius appears too much like your friendly uncle. Even his murder of his brother seems more like an act of a weak man stumbling to grab for power, than a premeditated act.

In the same way, Joy Soler de Castro's Gertrude is a lonely woman who turns to another man simply out of loneliness. Her sincere bafflement at Hamlet's accusations tends to show her as another victim. And when the Ghost appears, oozing in blood, to accuse her before Hamlet, Gertrude gets the sympathy.

At this point, you wonder which side the Ghost is on. Or are all these just the hormones of a very young Hamlet on overdrive?

Our Lady of Manaoag image enthroned in four churches in Leyte

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

THE RECENT enthronement of four images of Our Lady of Manaoag in Leyte stemmed from a promise made by Edna Ouano Toral in 1994 when she was struck with a strange illness that left her incapacitated for a time. When she got well through the intercession of Our Lady of Manaoag, she began to fulfill a promise that she would propagate the devotion to Our Lady under this title first in Cebu.

The first enthronement in 1996 of her image took place at St. Joseph Parish in Mandaue with the cooperation of Bishop Ranola, parish priest. As of this year, 10 churches in Cebu province have the images of Our Lady of Manaoag, donated by businessman Al Arriesgado whom I had the pleasure of meeting during a recent trip to Cebu. Like Edna, Al is donating images of Our Lady to fulfill a promise.

Devotion in Leyte

The first church to receive the image was in Kaibiran town last Dec. 3. The second was at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Naval last Feb. 17; the third was Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Kalubian; and the fourth was the Immaculate Conception Parish in Leyte, Leyte on Feb. 18.

Bishop Filomeno Bactol of the Diocese of Leyte and Fr. Patricio Apa, O.P., prior and parish priest of the Manaoag shrine in Pangasinan, did the enthronements.

A delegation of 30 people took the boat from Cebu to Ormoc, Leyte, which included the Our Lady of Manaoag Choir and Edna.

The weather was bad because of a typhoon. But the bad weather did not dampen the spirit of the people. Ormoc Mayor and Ms Eufrocinio Codilla and Ormoc devotees welcomed the visitors from Pangasinan and Cebu.

In Kalubian, they were welcomed by the parish priest, Fr. Vic Japson, and Mayor Renato Misa and members of the pastoral council. In Leyte, Leyte, Msgr. Silas Florencio, parish priest of Immaculate Conception Parish, Mayor Arnold James Ysidoro and Mr. and Ms Allan Ysidoro received the guests.

All throughout the enthronement, the Our Lady of Manaog Choir sang to Our Lady beautifully and happily.

Edna and her companions would like to thank the Sisters of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Hermitage Convent in Kananga, Leyte through the superior, Sr. Teresita Bello, and all the Leyteños for their caring and loving support.

Those who want free novenas to Our Lady of Manaoag can write me. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with two stamps for easier mailing.

Our Lady of Prompt Succor

THOSE who only have photocopies of the prayer to Our Lady of Prompt Succor, patroness of Buhi, Camarines Sur, can write me. I already have the original copies. Please enclose an envelope with one stamp.

Sto. Niño de Tacloban

WHEN we visited the shrine of Our Lady of Ubanon in Catbalogan, Samar, we passed by Tacloban and had lunch with Fr. Glenn Diaz, parish priest of San Jose Church, to where readers sent their donations for the making of a more than life-size image of St. Joseph made of cement. Father Glenn proudly showed us the image in the middle of the courtyard and told me to thank my readers for their help.

At the same lunch was Fr. Alex Opiniano, the new parish priest of the Sacred Heart Church. The fiesta falls on June 10, Father Alex reminded us.

Also, he called my attention to the financial

OUR LADY/ p.E7

BISHOP Filomeno Bactol presides over the enthronement of Our Lady of Manaoag in the Holy Rosary Parish in Naval, Leyte. With him are Fr. Jess Ty, Msgr. Silas Florencio and Fr. Pat Apa.

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A
Alternative
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On
Higher
Arithmetic

Math is made fun and easy at A.L.O.H.A. (Alternative Learning On Higher Arithmetic)

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How do the fingers aid in mental computation?

It has been shown through experimentation that the left side of the brain governs analytic functions, while the right side governs creative functions. It is also well known that the right side of the brain controls movements on the left side of the body, while the left side of the brain controls movements on the right side of the body. In effect, movements in both hands using the finger theory promote activity in both sides of the brain. This exercise enhances the mind's ability to compute mentally.

Who can enroll in A.L.O.H.A?

Preschoolers may enroll in Kinder Aloha, while Gradeschoolers enroll in the regular 4-stage program.

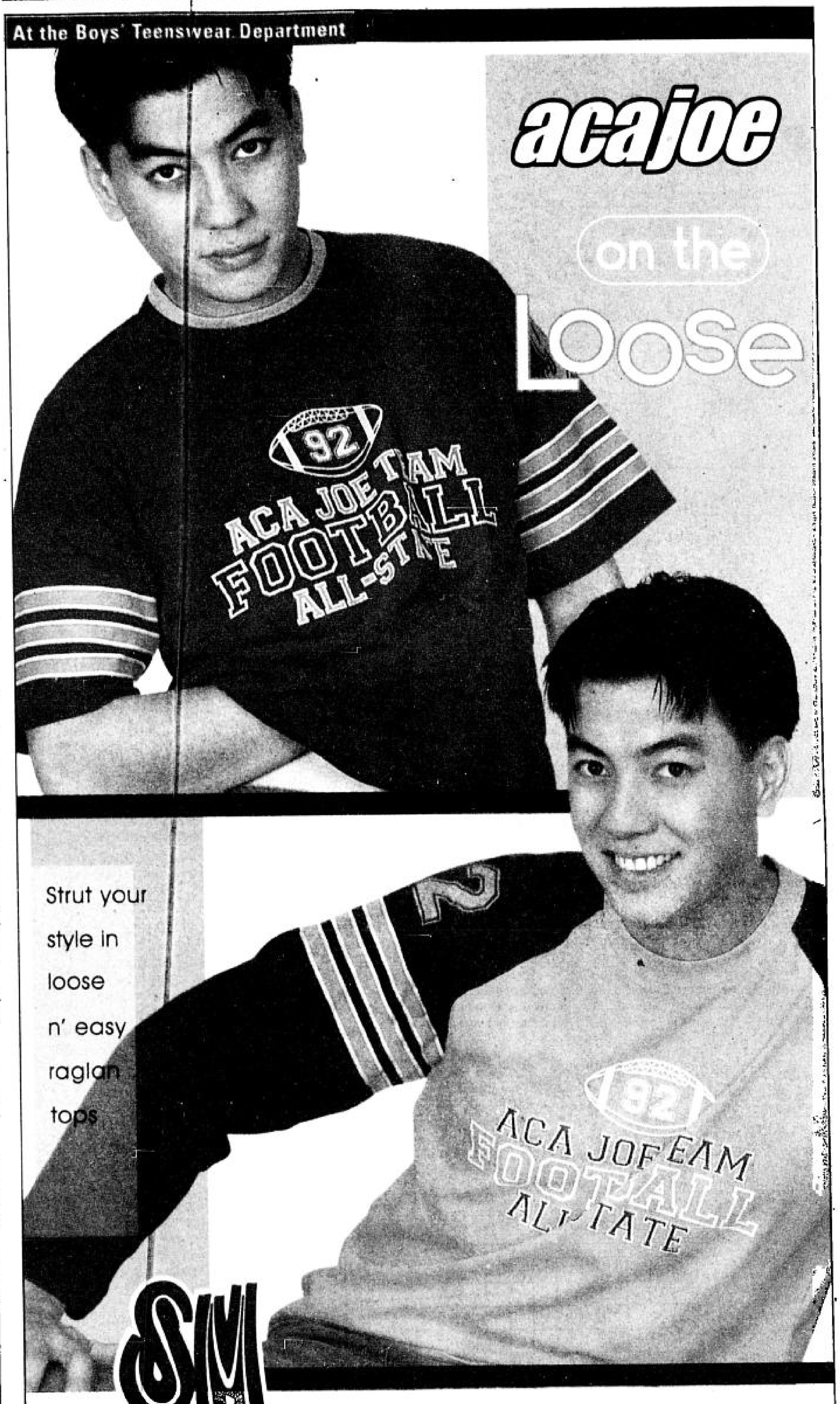
What can kids expect to learn in the regular program?

At stage 1, they learn the finger theory, stimulating the right and left sides of the brain.
At stage 2, they learn the use of the abacus along with the finger theory. The greater number of beads as compared to the limited number of fingers expands computing possibilities. The multiplication table is introduced.
At stage 3, mental computation is done by visualizing abacus beads or the fingers. Larger numbers are included in multiplication.
At stage 4, division is introduced.

*A.L.O.H.A. also offers the Math Solveware Program, exposing kids to all types of mathematical word problems given in school.

Help your child unleash his overall mental capabilities while building self-confidence and a well-rounded personality. Call the A.L.O.H.A. hotline at Tel. Nos. 244-70-41 to 43.

ALOHA



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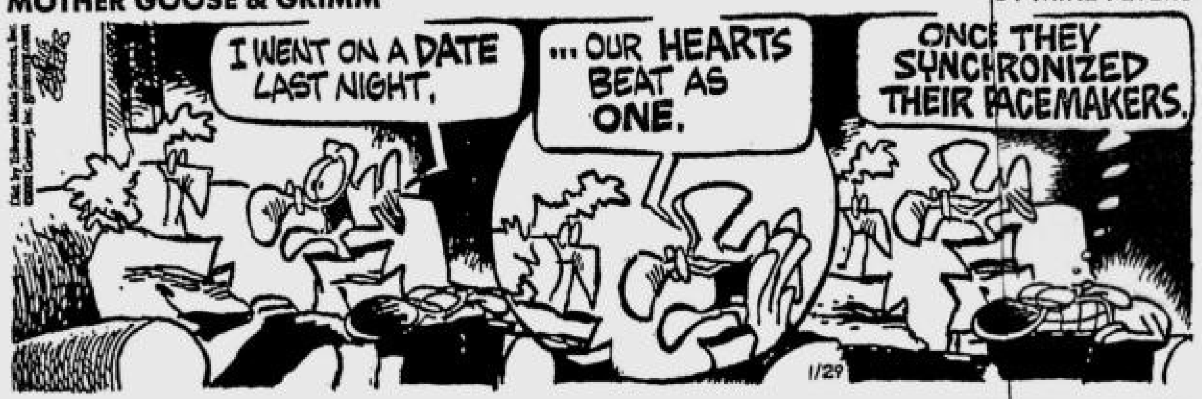
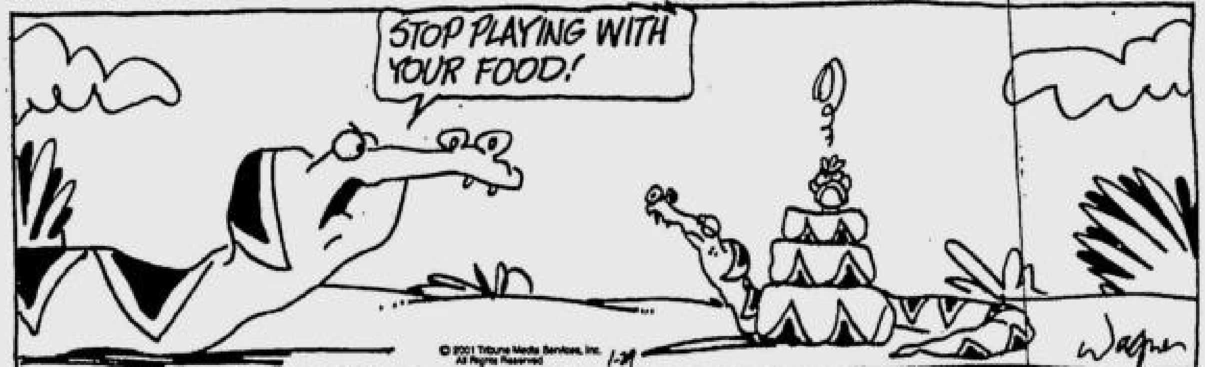
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I WENT ON A DATE LAST NIGHT.
...OUR HEARTS BEAT AS ONE.
ONCE THEY SYNCHRONIZED THEIR PACEMAKERS.
1/29

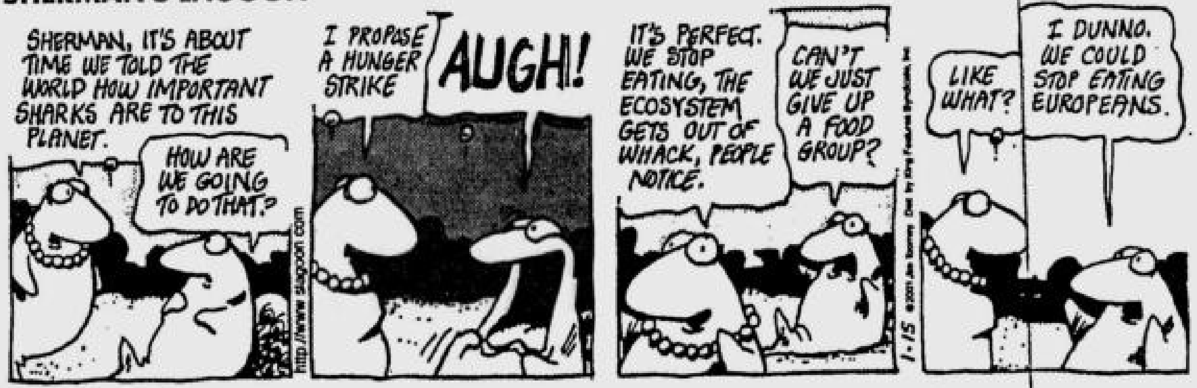
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


STOP PLAYING WITH YOUR FOOD!
© 2001 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved
1-29
Wagner

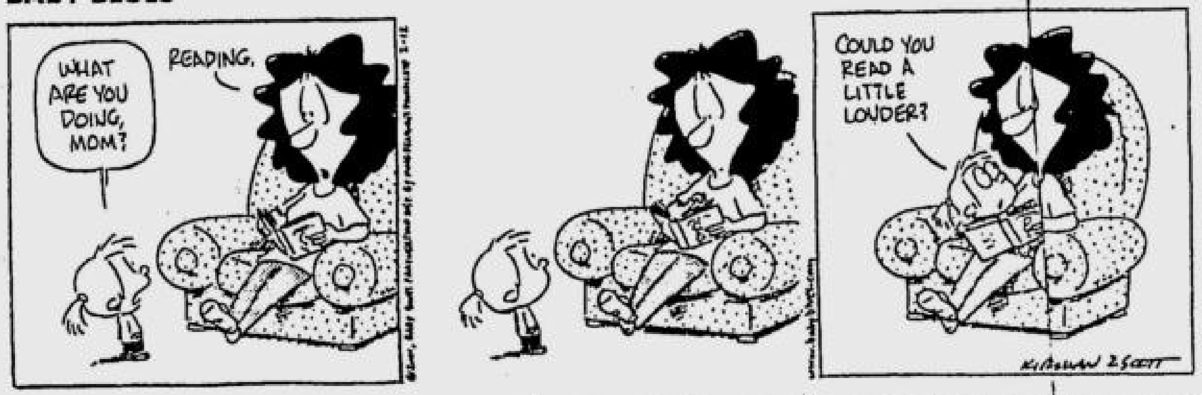
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SHERMAN, IT'S ABOUT TIME WE TOLD THE WORLD HOW IMPORTANT SHARKS ARE TO THIS PLANET.
HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?
I PROPOSE A HUNGER STRIKE
AUGH!
IT'S PERFECT. WE STOP EATING, THE ECOSYSTEM GETS OUT OF WHACK, PEOPLE NOTICE.
CAN'T WE JUST GIVE UP A FOOD GROUP?
LIKE WHAT?
I DUNNO. WE COULD STOP EATING EUROPEANS.
http://www.slagoon.com
1-15

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MOM?
READING.
COULD YOU READ A LITTLE LOUDER?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Michael Bolton, Tony Randall, Johnny Cash, Fats Domino, Jackie Gleason, Mitch Ryder

Happy Birthday: Gear up and get ready to excel. This can be a highly exciting year with lots of romance, intrigue and adventure if you don't sit back and just dream. Initiation will be the key to turning your dreams into reality. The hardest part will be pushing yourself to get started. Be brave, take a chance, and you'll have no regrets. Your numbers: 15, 26, 31, 35, 39, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You can spark enthusiasm in others. Once you realize your leadership potential, you won't mind taking on the brunt of the work. If you aren't self-employed, you should consider it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't ruffle the feathers of those individuals who are likely to become physically forceful. Minor accidents and arguments will lead to frustration and anxiety.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Be careful if you have to sign contracts or legal documents. There may be a clause that should be revised for your protection. Don't let others lean on you for financial assistance.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): This is not the day to argue with someone you love. Your partner may be uncertain about this relationship and to push him or her into a corner will only lead to estrangement. You need to take time to do things you enjoy with your friends.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Mental pursuits will be most challenging. You can acquire a great deal of information if you listen to experienced individuals or do some research on your own.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Be careful not to overdo it today. You will tire easily, which will result in a mediocre job. Take one thing at a time and stick to your usual methodical way of doing things.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You must not believe everything you hear. Ask questions and make sure that you have sufficient information before you make statements that could affect your reputation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Romantic opportunities will develop. Be careful not to let colleagues get the wrong idea. Don't be talked into making donations to charities you don't really believe in.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You need to get rid of some of the extra energy. Don't be afraid to take a stand on issues you believe in. If a leader is needed, it's up to you to take that position. You need a challenge to feel satisfied.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Love interests will develop through connections made at work. Make sure that you aren't going to jeopardize your job before you decide to get serious.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Keep your mind on what you are doing. Minor mishaps will occur if you haven't been paying attention. Small but important details may be overlooked.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Empty promises should be expected. Try to put your efforts into projects that will allow you to do the work yourself, which will spare you the frustrations of relying on others.

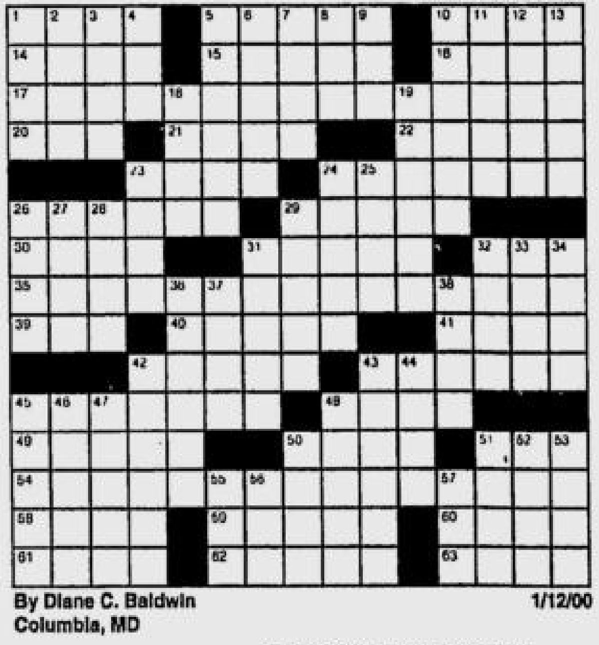
Birthday Baby: With your high energy, you will be raring to go and make it difficult for anyone to keep up. You are dashing, daring and impulsive. You usually land on your feet because of the speed at which you do things.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS
1 Pacific Ten sch.
5 Indian corn
10 Yearning
14 Symbolic cross
15 Dancer de Mille
16 __ En-lai
17 Acts mulish
20 Craft of sci-fi
21 Demands payment
22 Green spot in sand?
23 Join the band
24 Offspring
26 Go lickety-split
29 Hanker for
30 Buckeye State
31 Dunne of "Magnificent Obsession"
32 Affirmative in Yokohama
35 Stands firm
39 Cereal grass
40 Natalie and Paula
41 "Do __ others as..."
42 Eye shade
43 Clam's cousin
45 Nightclub
48 Held back
49 Baker or Ekberg
50 Aware of
51 Was left idle
54 Remains unmoved
58 Verge
59 Part of RFD
60 Pocket change
61 Stag, for example
62 Requirements
63 Candid

DOWN
1 Pakistani language
2 Hair arrangement
3 Trademark image
4 Junk mail, mostly
5 Handbook
6 Suffering
7 Travel stopovers
8 Alphabet conclusion
9 Seven before 8D
10 Time of glacial dominance
11 "We hold __ truths..."
12 Bush appointee Powell
13 Strumpet
18 Wait on a red light
19 Former FBI head
23 Goad
24 Fourth estate
25 Chimed
26 Danish physicist Niels
27 Sailor's shout
28 Enrage
29 Angler's basket
31 Cove
32 Attila's horde
33 Pot contents
34 Religious statue
36 Beetle type
37 Percolate
38 Kick out
42 Tea-party host
43 Ore products
44 Current
45 Made crow sounds
46 Cathode's counterpart
47 Spree
48 Stretch and pound
50 Grimm beast
51 Use scissors
52 Zenith
53 Afterwards
55 Samovar
56 Owed
57 Bridal vow



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

1/12/00

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

R	U	S	S	O		R	O	A	M		A	L	M	A
O	P	T	I	C		I	O	L	A		B	E	E	T
M	O	U	N	T		T	H	E	R	E	I	S	N	O
E	N	D	G	A	M	E		G	I	V	E	S	U	P
			E	V	A		C	A	N	E				
R	E	A	S	O	N	F	O	R	A	N	Y	O	N	E
U	T	A		S	O	A	R			S	E	R	I	N
N	H	R	A		N	A	S	A	L		A	B	E	T
A	N	G	L	E			I	D	E	S		I	C	E
T	O	H	A	V	E	A	C	O	M	P	U	T	E	R
				E	L	L	A		O	R	R			
P	I	E	R	R	O	T		S	N	U	B	B	E	D
I	N	H	I	S	H	O	M	E		C	A	I	N	E
A	R	U	M		I	N	I	T		E	N	D	O	W
F	E	D	S		M	A	S	H		S	A	S	S	Y

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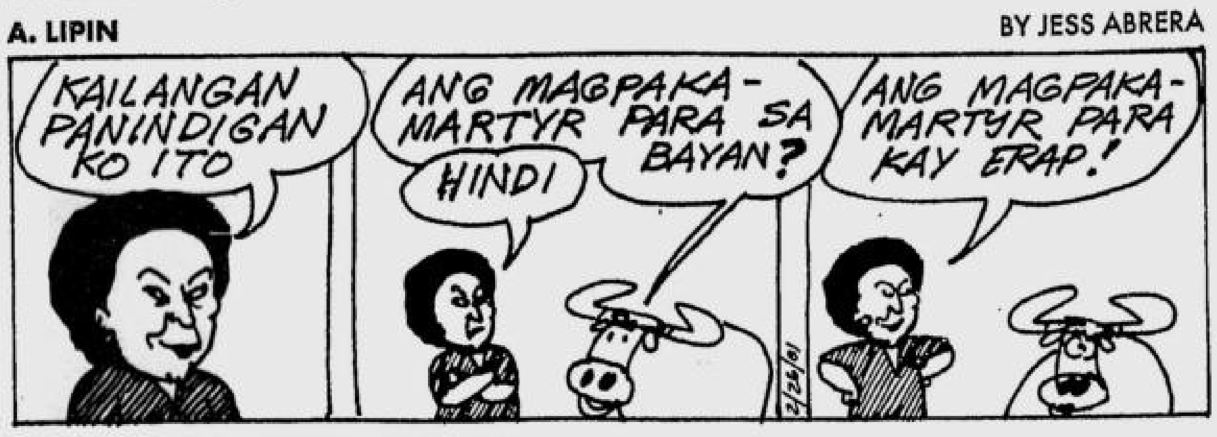
1/12/01

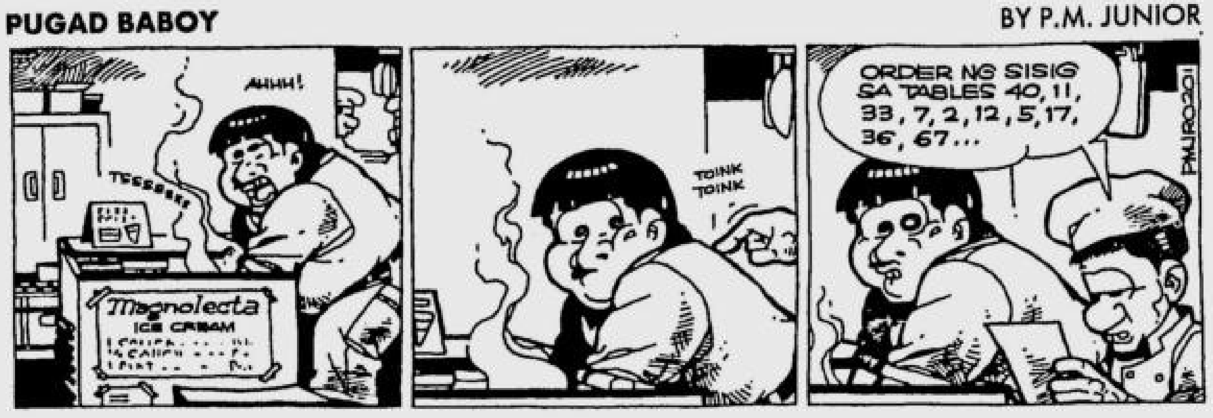
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KAILANGAN PANINDIGAN KO ITO
ANG MAGPAKA-MARTYR PARA SA BAYAN?
HINDI
ANG MAGPAKA-MARTYR PARA KAY ERAP!
2/26/01

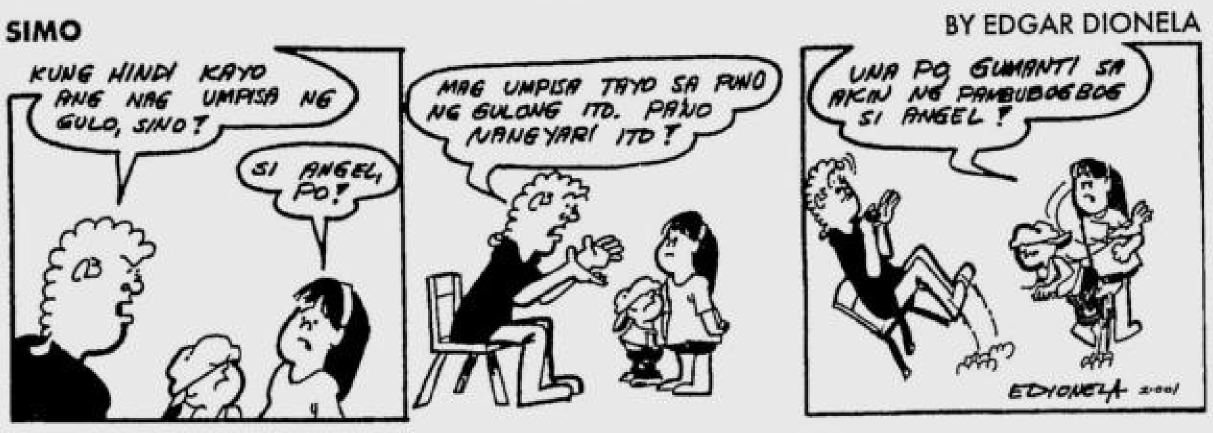
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AHHH!
TSSSSSS
Magnolecta ICE CREAM
TOINK TOINK
ORDER NG SISIG SA TABLES 40, 11, 33, 7, 2, 12, 5, 17, 36, 67...
PMJR0201

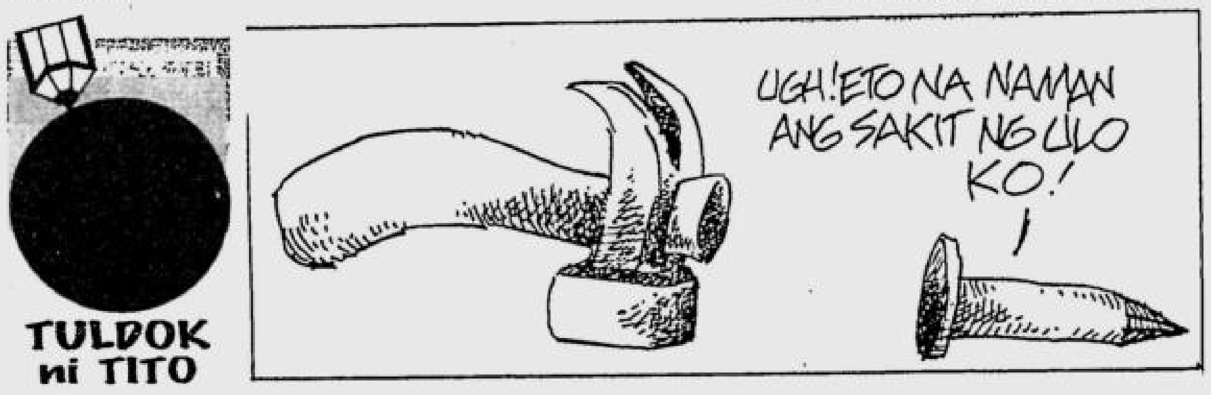
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


KUNG HINDI KAYO ANG NAG UMPISA NG GULO, SINO?
SI ANGEL, PO?
MAG UMPISA TAYO SA PUNO NG GULONG ITO. PANO NANGYARI ITO?
UNA PO GUMANTI SA AKIN NG PAMBUBOGBOG SI ANGEL?
EDIONELA 2001

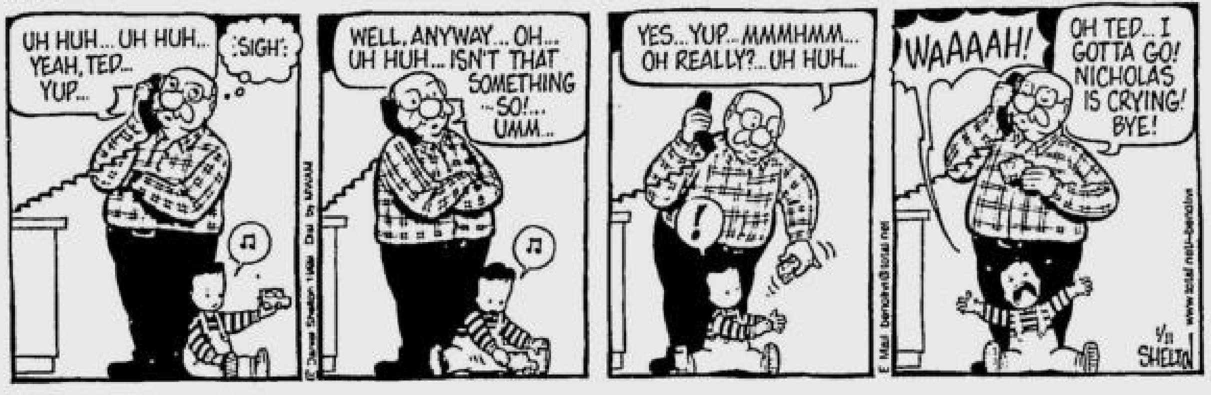
TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


UGH! ETO NA NAMAN ANG SAKIT NG ULO KO!
TULDOK ni TITO

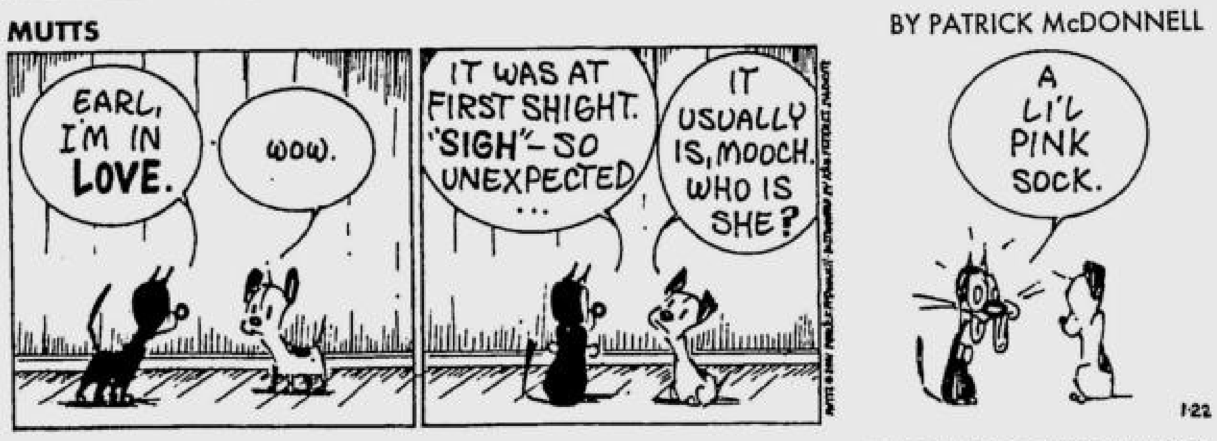
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


UH HUH... UH HUH... YEAH, TED... YUP...
SIGH
WELL, ANYWAY... OH... UH HUH... ISN'T THAT SOMETHING ...SO!.. UMM...
YES... YUP... MMMHMM... OH REALLY?... UH HUH...
WAAAAH!
OH TED... I GOTTA GO! NICHOLAS IS CRYING! BYE!
SHELTON

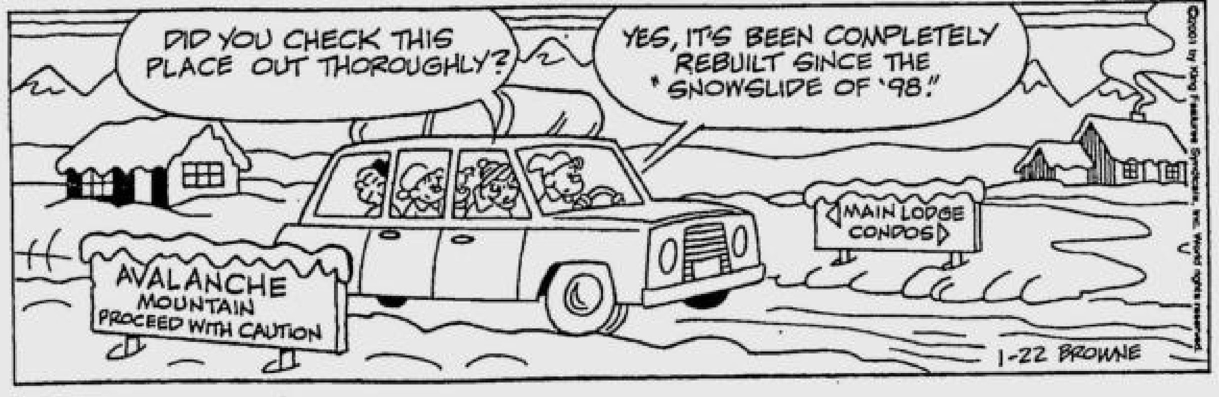
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL, I'M IN LOVE.
WOW.
IT WAS AT FIRST SHIGHT. 'SIGH'- SO UNEXPECTED...
IT USUALLY IS, MOOCH. WHO IS SHE?
A LI'L PINK SOCK.
1-22

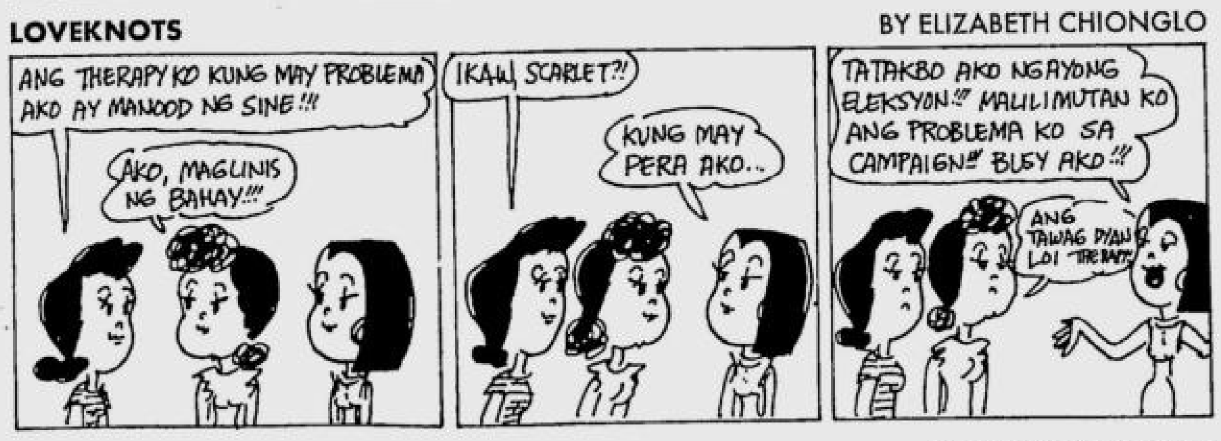
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


DID YOU CHECK THIS PLACE OUT THOROUGHLY?
YES, IT'S BEEN COMPLETELY REBUILT SINCE THE "SNOWSLIDE OF '98."
AVALANCHE MOUNTAIN PROCEED WITH CAUTION
MAIN LODGE CONDOS
1-22 BROWNE

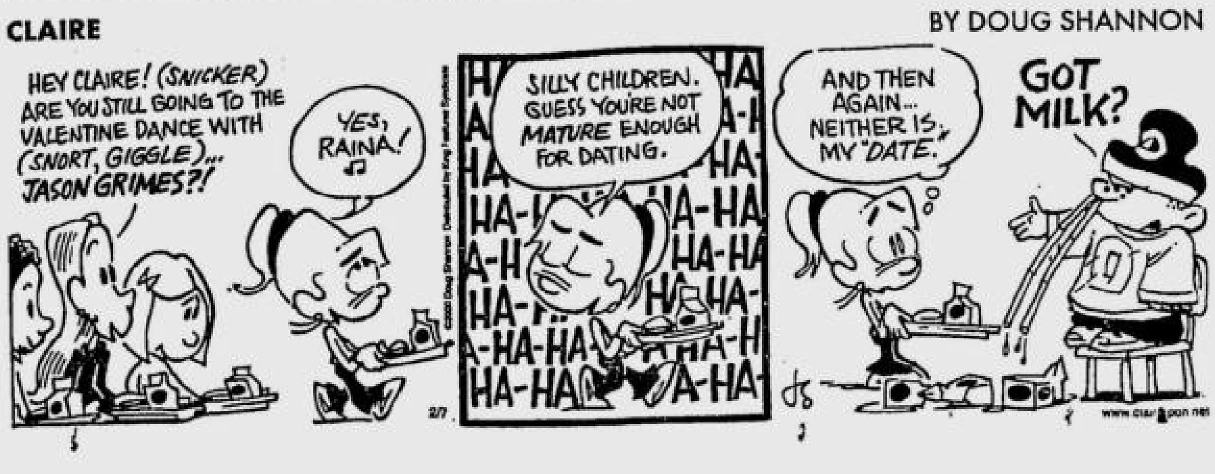
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG THERAPY KO KUNG MAY PROBLEMA AKO AY MANOOD NG SINE!!!
AKO, MAGLINIS NG BAHAY!!!
IKAW, SCARLET?!
KUNG MAY PERA AKO...
TATAKBO AKO NGAYONG ELEKSYON!!! MALILIMUTAN KO ANG PROBLEMA KO SA CAMPAIGN!!! BUSY AKO!!!
ANG TAWAG DYAN LOI THERAPY

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


HEY CLAIRE! (SNICKER) ARE YOU STILL GOING TO THE VALENTINE DANCE WITH (SNORT, GIGGLE)... JASON GRIMES?!
YES, RAINA! ♫
SILLY CHILDREN. GUESS YOU'RE NOT MATURE ENOUGH FOR DATING.
HA-HA-HA-HA
AND THEN AGAIN... NEITHER IS MY "DATE."
GOT MILK?
2/7
www.clairetoon.net

Our Lady of Manaoag image enthroned in four churches in Leyte

OUR Lady of Manaoag is being boarded into the Supercat for Ormoc, Leyte.

(From page E5)

needs of a seminarian, Jude Acidre. Those who want to help him can write Fr. Joseph Cesar Diamante, rector of Sacred Heart Seminary in Palo, Leyte.

Later in the day, we visited the church of the Sto. Niño de Tacloban. The feast of the miraculous Sto. Niño falls on June 30. The altar of the church had completely been transformed into gold leaf, both the main and the side altars—a fitting shrine for the miraculous image.

Man healed by holy oil

DURING THE FIESTA of the Sto. Niño de Providencia in January 1999 in BF Resort Village, Las Piñas, a man lined up for the anointing of the oil by a priest. The line was long, but the man waited patiently for his turn.

When he was standing finally before the priest, he lifted his shirt and asked the priest to anoint him not only on the forehead, but on his chest as well. The man was later cured from a terminal illness.

Lorna Gonzales, caretaker of the Sto. Niño chapel, would like to thank Mimi Bayani for painting the chapel and Enjing Gomez for providing the Ati-Atihan for the fiesta last Jan. 27.

St. Joseph fiesta at Hospicio de San Jose

THE FRIENDS of St. Joseph are now preparing for the Fiesta del Señor San Jose 2001 at the Hospicio de San Jose on March 10-19. An exhibit of images and novena Masses highlighted by a procession inside the Hospicio compound are the main activities.

Those who want to exhibit their St. Joseph images can beep me at 141-020543. Registration is on March 8 and 9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Hospicio.

This year's president is Danny T. Reyes. *Hermanos mayores* are Mely Ablaza and Joseph Christian Singson.

St. Joseph to Catbalogan

A MIRACLE happened when Nena Elizalde offered to bring the donated statue of St. Joseph via PAL to Catbalogan on March 19. Nena will buy a seat for the statue in the plane to Tacloban and then brought by car to Samar. This solves the problem of transporting the image to the shrine of Our Lady of Ubanon. Thanks to readers for making this possible.

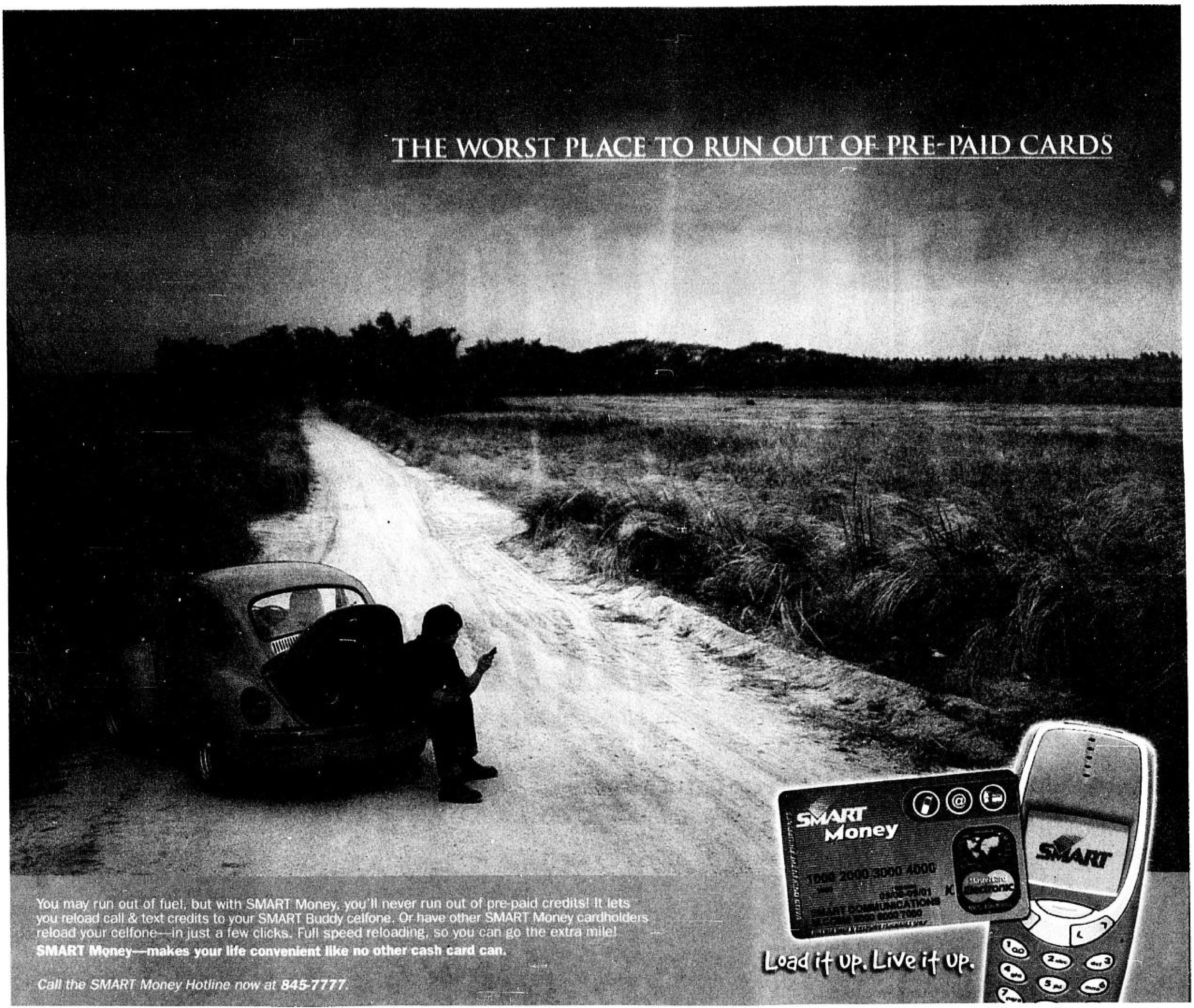
Ash Wednesday

ASH Wednesday falls on Feb. 28. Holy Week begins on April 8.

Those who want to spend Holy Week in the Holy Land can call Alice Padlan of Arpex Travel at tel. 525-3883. The group leaves for Paris on April 15, en route to Lourdes.

Friends of St. Joseph

THE FRIENDS of St. Joseph will hold a general meeting on March 3, 4-7 p.m. at the Sto. Niño Chapel inside the Violago compound near Walter Mart on E. Rodriguez Avenue, QC. Call Jessie Nell at 811-9000, local 5712.



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'Despedida,' Mexican style

DON Paco Delgado and Vicky Quirino-Delgado

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

Amiga

JUST when everyone thought the party season was over after Christmas, along came all the *despedidas* for Mexican Ambassador **Enrique** and **Amaya Michel**, who had endeared herself to so many people. Friends are now threatening to invade Mexico as soon as the Michels establish a permanent base. Ambassador Michel has been promoted to chief of protocol for Mexico's president-elect **Vicente Fox**, but their five-year stint here has assured them a special place in their friends' hearts.

Holiday décor hadn't been dismantled yet when brothers **Johnny** and **Arturo Rocha** with their elegant spouses, **Pilina** and **Marisa**, tendered an elegant dinner for the Michels in January. A lot of the invitees from Makati had no reason for being late except that they were glued to the TV's most popular telenovela—the impeachment trial.

AMBASSADOR Johnny Rocha

Naturally it was *the* topic of the evening with everyone giving his two cents' worth of non-legal opinion. Via Mare's buffet was, as usual, stupendous with **Glenda**'s piece de resistance, corned beef, which had everyone junking his diet and going for seconds. According to **Jose Cabarrus**, if you want to eat well, go to one of Arturo's dinners. Some hosts should seriously consider giving "leftover" parties.

The Rocha dinner was followed by more than a few other receptions and luncheons among the many friends that the popular and pretty Amaya has accumulated.

NEW Zealand Ambassador Graeme Waters and Amaya Michel

LOURDES Montinola and Conchitina Bernardo

At **Melly Ablaza** and **Letty Syquia**'s lunch, the latter had tears in her eyes recounting Amaya's selflessness and how she had always been there in times of need especially after the Syquia residence burnt down, and her generosity in supporting the Friends of the CCP, the Red Cross, the Cancer Society and other organizations that Letty belongs to.

Helen Ong also tendered a lunch that included two roses, **Boysie Villavicencio** and Brazil's charge d'affaires **Carlos de Carvalho,** who had discovered Rizal's "Noli" and "Fili" and was reading them in the original.

Señor Carlos also has a stupendous voice and an even more stupendous collection of pre-Columbian pottery. In the meantime, Helen and Amaya are already making dates to meet in L.A. to go outlet shopping on the way to Vegas, would you believe? Helen insists that Amaya meet her friends there.

Melly Hechanova, she of the fab jewels (the green of her peridots matched her shirt), is renowned for her cooking with good reason. No catering for her as she supervised the roast turkey with all the trimmings, baked fresh salmon with hollandaise, *pochero* with bone marrow and a marvelous *fabada*, during another *despedida* for Amaya at the Hechanova residence. It wasn't the time to think about diets for **Mary Prieto, Vicky Delgado, Chloe Romulo Periquet, Nenuca Araneta** and **Tereret Liboro** or, for that matter, any of the other guests. Surprise of the day was **Elena Colomé** showing up with daughter **Marit Yuchengco** whose baby is due any day now. Stylish **Nene Quimson** who, according to **Pitoy Moreno,** is a pity she's related to the First Husband as she would make a fine ambassador to the Court of St. James. **Minnie Pertierra,** in town for a short while before jetting back to the United States, catching up on all the rumors, *habidos y por hater* as they say, made a rare appearance with **Zita Feliciano**. It was a fine day to say "Hello" to friends (that one doesn't see as often, what with traffic and the pace of life) and "See you soon" to Amaya that no one wanted to bid goodbye to.

ARTURO Rocha and Mexican Ambassador Enrique Michel

PHOTOS: BETOY JOHNSON

EVIE Costa and Stephane Michel

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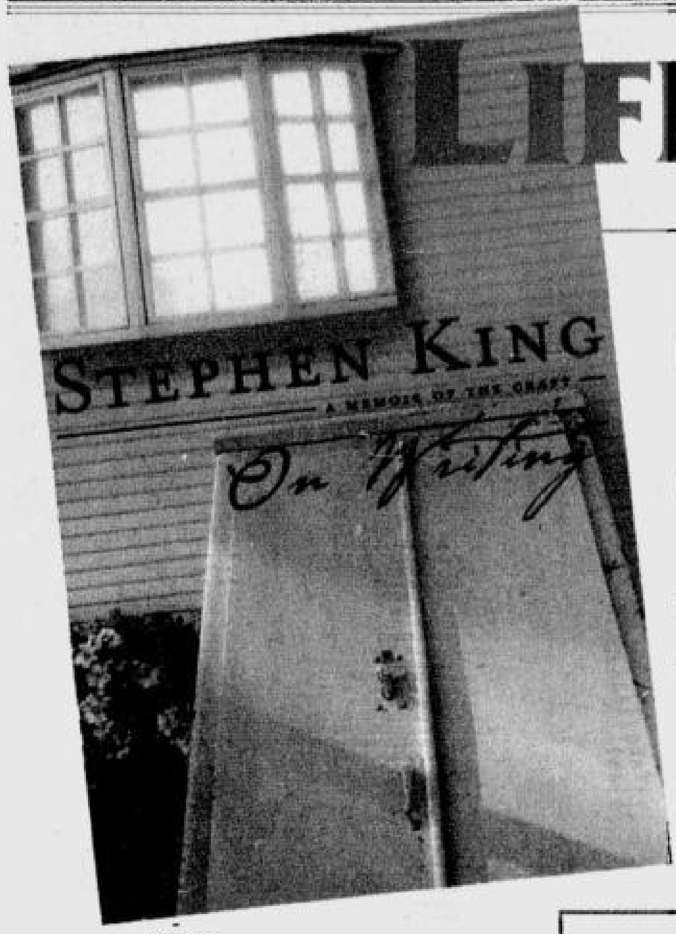


Stephen King explains it all for you

The supremely successful writer shares secrets and tricks in sublime memoir

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft
By Stephen King
Scribner, New York,
2000, 288 pages

By RUEL S. DE VERA

REVIEW

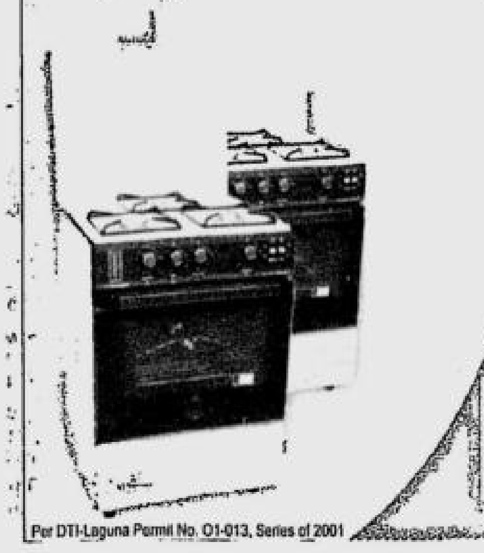
STEPHEN King is scary. Not just because he is the undisputed grand master of fictional horror, but because no other writer has reinvented and refined his own writing through the years. With more than 30 books to this name, King is the ruler of his creative domain, able to write pretty much anything he wants with success: novels. Yet King himself has lived a life of nosebleed-inducing highs and five-fathom lows. And he has kept writing through all that. How exactly did he do it?

King answers those questions and more with the much-awaited "On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft," a memoir and a guide to writing.

"What follows is an attempt to put down, briefly and simply, how I came to the craft, what I know about it now, and how it's done. It's about the day job; it's about the language," he explains.

Now perhaps some biased readers still believe that all King is good at is churning out gory, nail-biting stories that get turned into bad mov-

STEPHEN/ p.F4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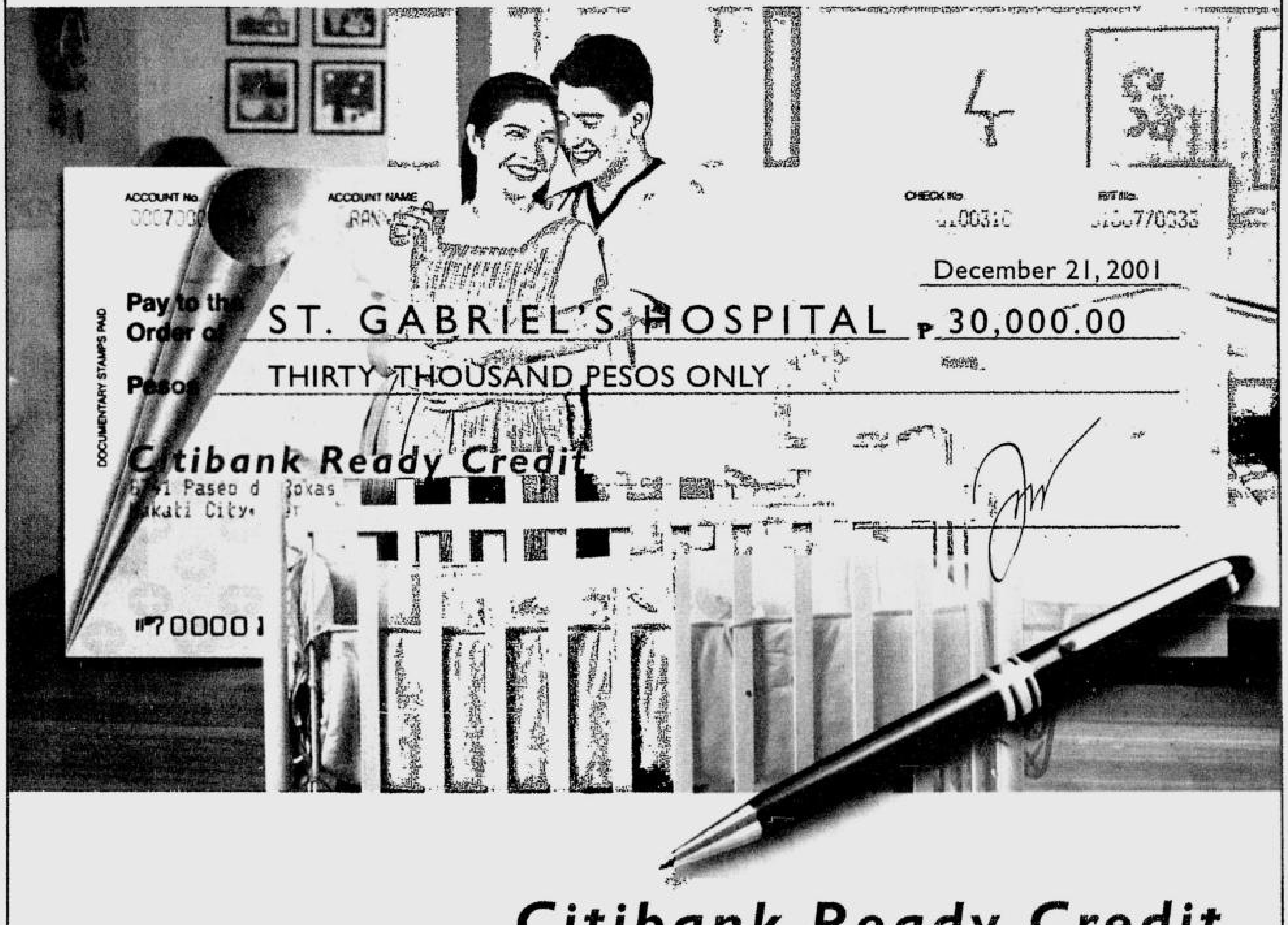

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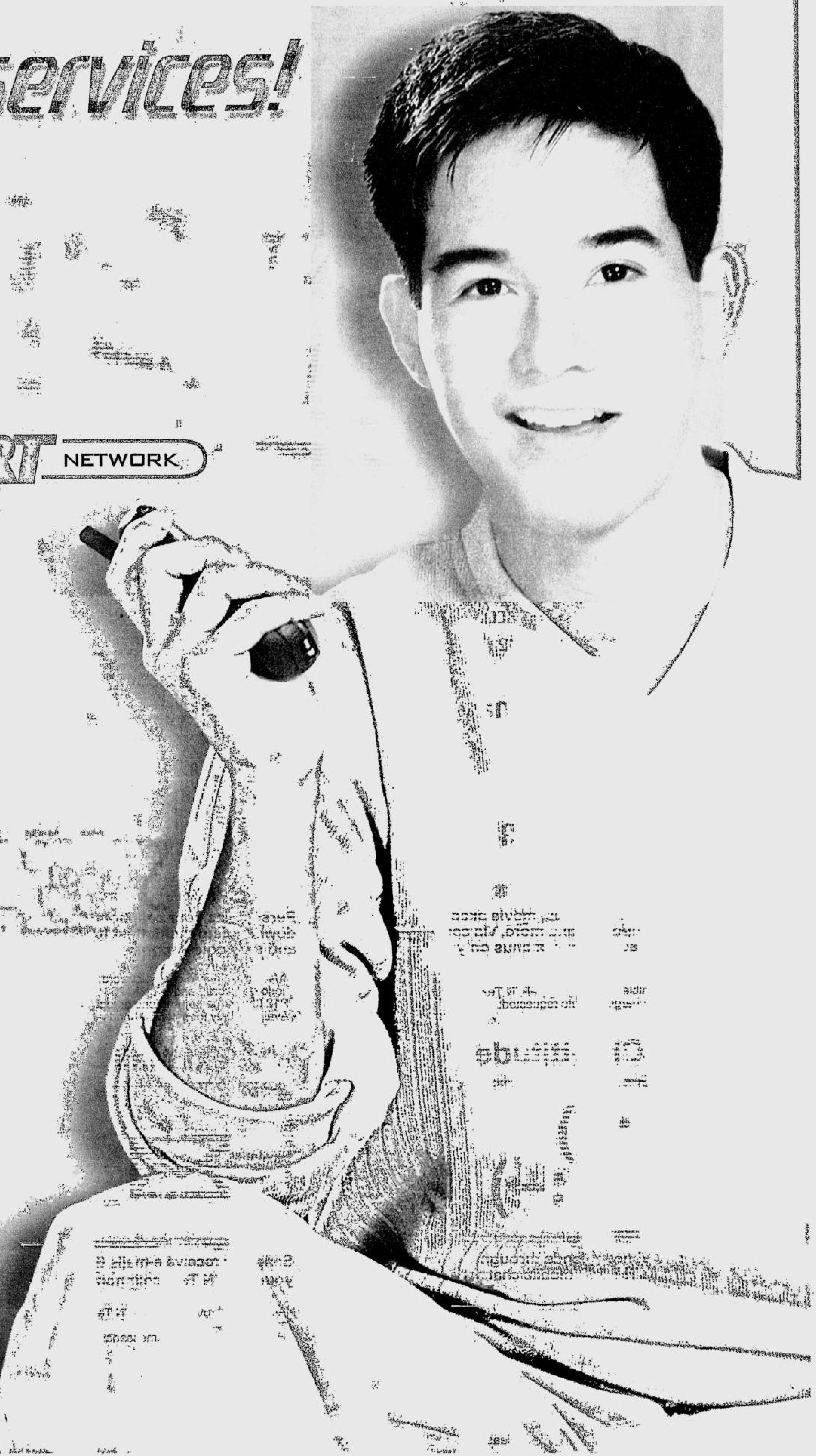

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Philippine-British literary conference moves to Bacolod

RODNEY Bell, British Council-Manila director, with the Council's program officer Nannette Mercado

JOSE Wendell Capili

THE SOUTHERN leg of the fifth annual Philippine-British Literary Conference opens today at the Balay Kalinungan Retreat House of the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City.

English fictionist Suzannah Dunn and Scottish poet Roddy Lumsden will reprise the talks and readings they gave to the Manila leg of the conference at the University of Santo Tomas. They will be joined by Ramon Magsaysay laureate F. Sionil Jose, top poetess Ophelia Alcantara Dimalanta and young writer Jose Wendell Capili.

Rodney Bell, director of the British Council-Manila, will open the two-day conference. Elsa Coscuella, vice president of the University of St. La Salle and an award-winning writer, is conference chair.

The highly successful Manila leg of the conference ended Friday at the UST Center for Intercultural Studies. Joining Dunn and Lumsden were Centennial Literary Prize grand award winner Cirilo Bautista, young feminist poet Rebecca Anonuevo and Catholic fictionist Carlos Aureus. Chair of the conference was Dimalanta, the director of the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies, which cosponsored the event with the British Council.

F. SIONIL Jose and Ophelia Dimalanta

ELSA Coscuella

Final call for applications to UST National Writers Workshop

THE CENTER for Creative Writing and Studies of the University of Santo Tomas (UST-CCWS) is making a final call for applications to the Second National Writers Workshop to be held on April 24-29 in Baguio City.

The deadline for submission is March 7.

The workshop will focus on poetry and fiction. It is open to budding writers who have not been awarded fellowships to any national writers' workshop. An applicant should submit a manuscript containing at least five poems and/or two short stories, in English or Filipino; a résumé and 2x2 ID photo; and certification duly signed by the head of his/her institution that the articles are authentic and have not been copied elsewhere.

There are 15 fellowships available, a percentage of which will go to constituents of the Dominican Network of Schools, Colleges and Universities.

Send manuscripts to the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies, 1/F St. Raymund's (AB-Commerce) Building, University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila. Call the UST-CCWS at 731-3101 local 8281, Tuesday to Saturday.

Stephen King . . .

(From page F1)

ies.

Simply not true. Each of King's novels has been part of King's maturation process as a preeminent writer, and the secrets to his success have been accessibility, production and versatility. He has shown he can do the terrifyingly supernatural ("Carrie," "It") and the psychologically chilling ("The Dark Half," "Misery"). Yet he has also done the touching and the inspiring (the stories "Stand by Me" and "The Shawshank Redemption").

"On Writing" gives readers a clue how King wound up the way he is. The book is vintage King, especially when he clarifies that "this is a short book because most books about writing are filled with bulls--t... I figured the shorter the book, the less the bulls--t."

Unsentimental

None of that stuff here. King's memories of his childhood are clear and untouched by sentimentality, brimming both with ear-drilling pain and tinkling laughter. Readers will meet young Stevie King, addicted to science fiction movies, who starts writing at a young age, plays sidekick to super duper older brother Dave, and son to suffering mother Ruth. Readers will find out where King picked up his taste for the macabre and the ideas for his books.

The first portion deals with the genesis of King's writing through his early life and it is a charming, honest read. A pivotal moment occurs when King, while studying in college, meets his future wife, Tabitha. It is Tabby who would enable King to rise above the threatening poverty and despair to be able to keep writing. He himself acknowledges this when he writes "whenever I see a first novel dedicated to a wife (or a husband), I smile and I think, There's someone who knows.

"Writing is a lonely job. Having someone who believes in you makes a lot of difference. They don't have to make speeches. Just believing is usually enough."

Readers will thus be saddened by the death of King's brave mother, but also buoyed by the moment when "Carrie" is finally about to published.

This is the writer's life, unplugged and maybe a lot more naked than usual.

The rest of the book deals with King's views on the process of writing.

Candid style

Not all of it is new, but distilled through King's candid, gruffly brilliant style, it is both undeniably true and addictively likeable.

In effect, King blows wide open the door to his Maine home and shows you all his tools, all his preparations and processes—telling you exactly how, and perhaps more importantly, why he writes. He unravels the process as something personal and solitary, but also necessary: "It starts with this: put your desk in the corner, and every time you sit down there to write, remind yourself why it isn't in the middle of the room. Life isn't a support-system for art. It's the other way around."

Along the way, readers will also discover King's preferences and dislikes (he likes "Harry Potter" and finds "The Bridges of Madison County" too saccharine).

King dispels popular myths about writing, serving as measured cheerleader, dreaded taskmaster, and loving disciple all at once. He acknowledges the difficulties and the trials of his profession, notably his decision to write fiction: "Writing fiction, especially a long work of fiction, can be a difficult, lonely job; it's like crossing the Atlantic Ocean in a bathtub."

As King goes on to discuss the terrible 1999 accident that almost took his life, he drives home the most important lesson of all: writing is meant to make all of us happier, better people, more appreciative of our lives. All those books, all the accolades fall second to the simple, inalienable joy of creation. King transmits this message in 288 short pages of spare, tasteful, well-crafted and delicious prose. The sublime memoir that is "On Writing" is a beautiful work of memory and creative juices, something all writers should read. They should read it because Stephen King is a perfect example of some who is a true believer in writing's redemptive power, and he believes we all should be as well. "Writing is magic," he concludes, "as much the water of life as any other creative art. The water is free. So drink." Bottoms up.

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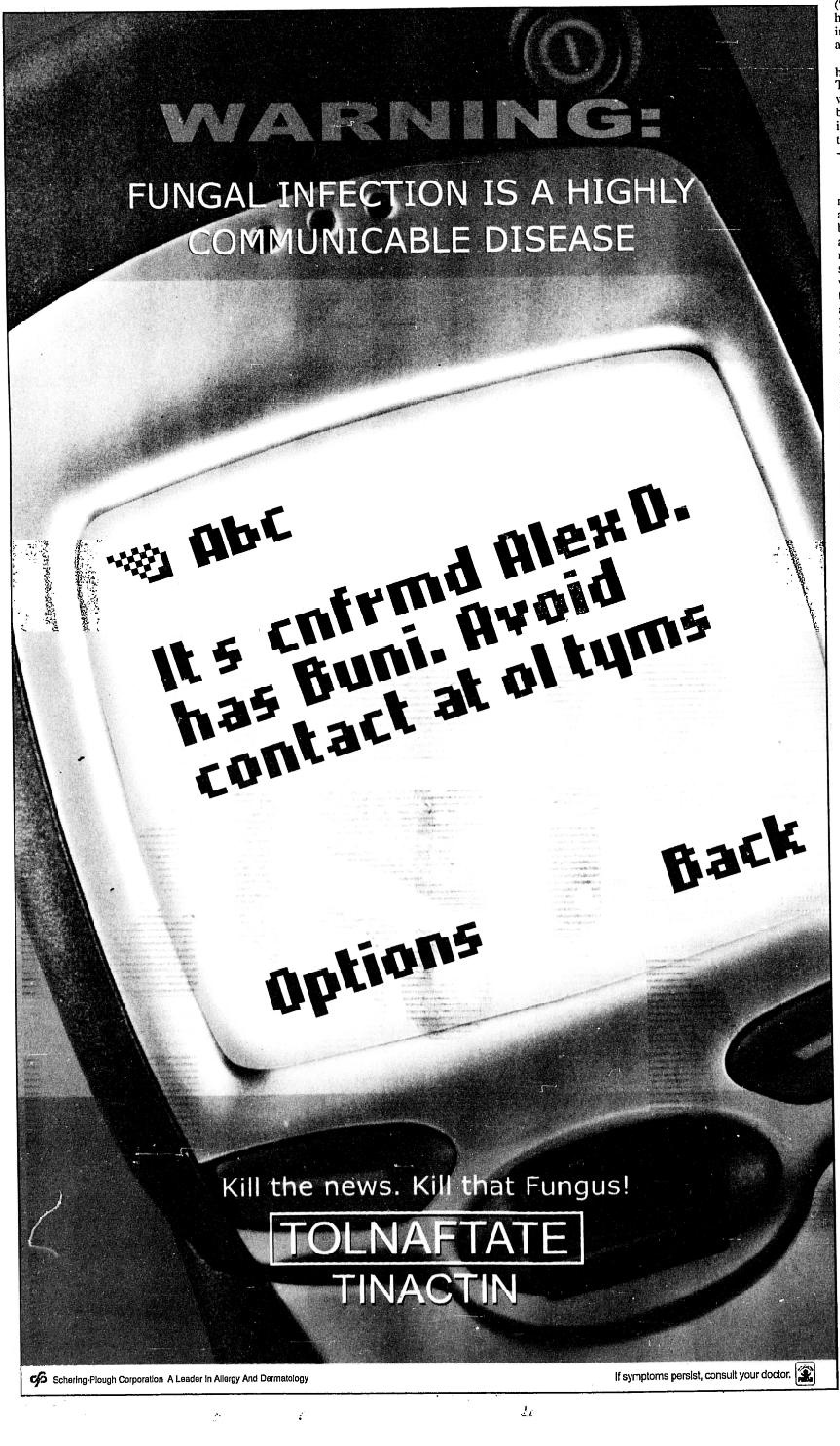
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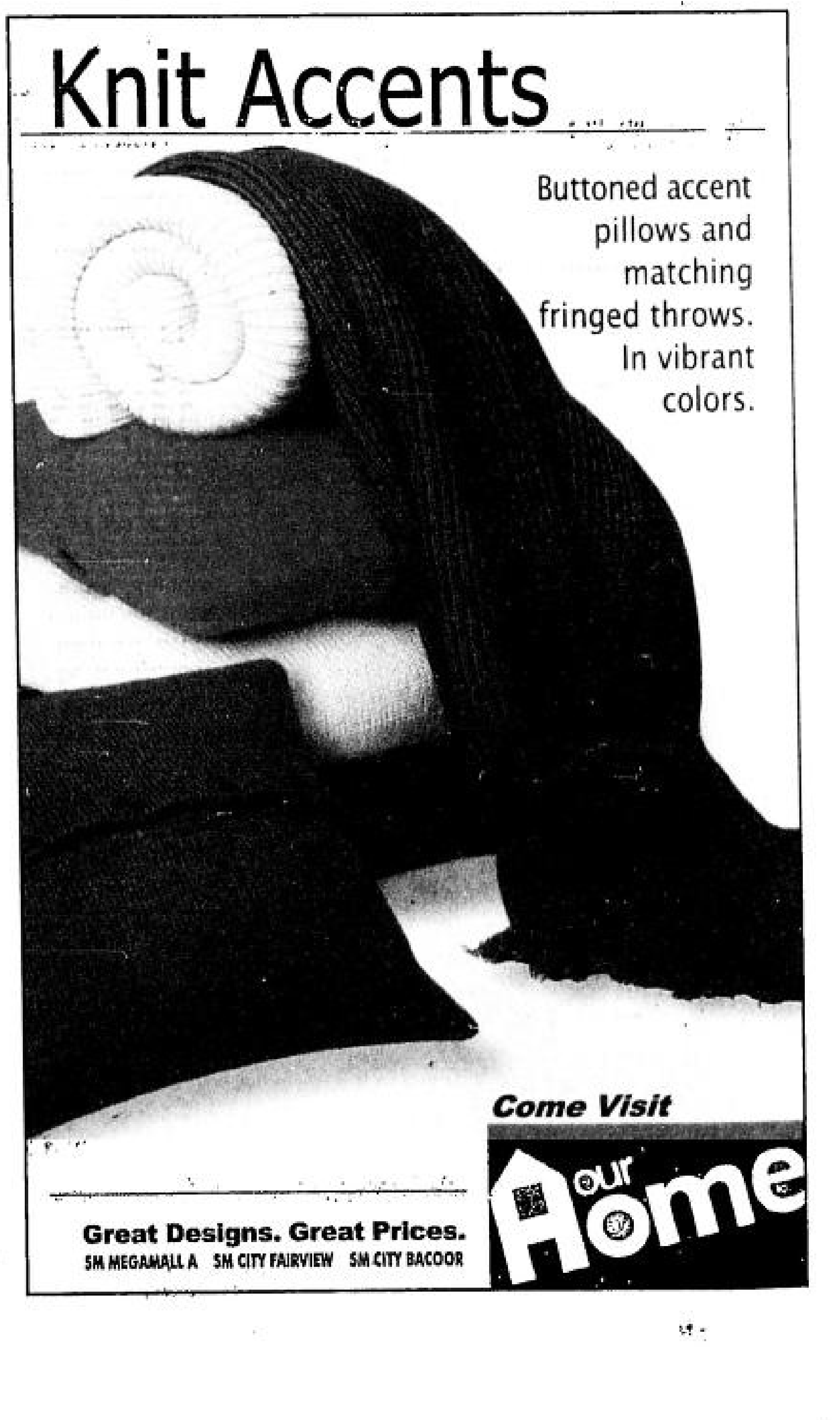
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